

M E M O I R S
OF THE
Life and Experiences
OF
MARION LAIRD

An unmarried Woman in GREENOCK

CONTAINING,

An Account of the LORD's gracious dealing
with her soul, the deep exercise she was
many times brought into, the severe trials
and temptations she met with, the remark-
able deliverances wrought for her, and the
signal displays of divine condescendency
vouchsafed to her.

To which is subjoined,

A Collection of Forty-seven Religious Letters
to select Friends, during her thirteen years trial.

WITH

A PREFACE, containing some farther Account
her LIFE and DEATH,

THE SECOND EDITION.

With a Preface by the Rev. Mr. COCK.

*Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath
done for my soul.—I will meditate also of all thy wonders, O LORD,
thy doings.*

PSALM lvi. 10.

G L A S G O W,

Printed by WILLIAM FLEMING,
And Sold at his Shop, at the ...

M D C C X I



P R E F A C E
T O T H E
R E A D E R.*

Dear and Christian Reader,

MARION LAIRD, the Author of the following Memoirs, in her younger years had very indistinct views of the doctrines of the gospel; or, of the difference between legal and evangelical preaching: but so soon as the Lord was graciously pleased to open her eyes to discern the vast difference that there is between these two; she made it her study to go forth by the *footsteps of the flock*, and *feed beside the shepherds tents*, who preached the gospel in its purity and simplicity.

She was for sometime under the ministry of that judicious and faithful servant of Christ, the Rev. Mr. M^cCARA, minister of the gospel in the parish of Kilbarchan, who, if I mistake not, was her spiritual father; at least she had the seals of his ministry and apostleship in her soul. And though, towards the close of his ministry in that place, he was rejected by a part of his flock; nay, persecuted by them, under the influence, and in conjunction with some of his brethren in the ministry; especially for his

* When the following Memoirs were first printed, this Preface had not come to hand.

faithfulness, both in the pulpit, in reproof for the prevailing evils in his congregation; and for the like freedom in judicatures, as to some irregularities prevailing among them: Yet, I have no doubt, but that he, upon his departure, entered into the joy of his Lord; and that not a few of his flock, to whom his ministry was savory and edifying, who were gone to glory, a considerable time before himself, are now joining with him in singing the song of Moses and the Lamb; and that they will be to him a crown of joy in the great day of the Lord.

As Marion Laird's parents and relations lived in Greenock, where the great Lord of the vineyard called me, however unworthy, to labour in word and doctrine, she came from the country to that place, where she was for several years under my ministry, which the Lord was pleased to bless for her edification, as will appear from the following sheets.—I had some acquaintance with her before this time; but after her residence at the shore, in consequence of the pastoral relation that took place between her and me, I soon became more intimately acquainted with her.—So long as her bodily health and strength would permit, she not only gave a most constant and regular attendance upon public ordinances of divine institution; but was a very grave, attentive, and judicious hearer: And, as will appear from her memoirs, yielded obedience to the double and important counsel of the blessed

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Jesus, to all the hearers of the everlasting gospel, recorded, Mark iv. 24. *Take heed WHAT ye hear*; and Luke viii. 18. *Take heed therefore HOW ye hear*.

After the Lord, in holy providence, laid his afflicting hand upon her, and cast her into a sick bed, I visited her frequently; in which I had great pleasure, and think I can say that her converse was both savory and edifying: And I am persuaded, that many of her visitants, from their sweet experience, can attest the same truth; and that both from her religious letters, and converse with her.

She was not so happy, as could have been wished, in committing her thoughts and experiences to writing, as she was not very good of the pen: But this I can with freedom say, that, in conversation, she was one of the most distinct, judicious, and experienced Christians that ever I conversed with; in so much, that, in general, what she spoke might have been printed, and would have read very well.

She had much of the Lord's mind; for, *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his covenant*, Psal. xxy. 24.—It was very much her practice to carry, not only her own diffculting cases, but likewise those of others, and those of the church of God, to a throne of grace, in a way of meditation and prayer: And was highly favoured with very particular and distinct returns and answers of prayer, in many instances.—Though she was confined to a sick

bed, almost without intermission, for about the space of thirteen years; insomuch, that it was a rare thing for her to get out of her bed, till it was made, for the most part of that time, without either fainting, or being in hazard of it: Yet she bore the chastisement of the Lord with amazing patience and holy resignation; scarcely did she ever repine, viewing her affliction as coming out of the hand of her God in covenant, and Father in Christ. Though she was often and much alone; yet I am persuaded, she could say, from sweet experience, with our blessed Lord, John viii. 16, *I am not alone.*—And that he who was with the three children of the captivity, in the seven times heated furnace, was much with her, Dan. iii. 16, &c.

The many errors and evils which prevailed in the established church; in a special manner the awful rupture that took place in the associate synod, about the affair of the religious clause of the burghers-oath, (which, by the bye, ought never to have been matter of controversy, at least their difference of judgment about it, ought never to have been a term of ministerial and Christian communion among them;) this affair, I say, together with its sad effects, the mournful contentions, some judicial procedure, and awful confusions that afterward so generally took place among the ministers and people of the secession, were matter of deep exercise and grief to her soul, and sent her many errands to a throne of grace: and which,

I believe, was likewise the case with not a few of the godly, both ministers and people.

In views of death, the following Memoirs she put into my hand, sometime before I went abroad, in order to be disposed of as I should see cause: And if it should be thought they might tend to promote the glory of God, and edification of his people, by publication, after her decease, that I should revise them for the press. In which she spoke with great humility and self-denial.—Whereupon, in a more cursory way, I glanced these papers:—But being appointed by the Associate Synod, on a mission to North-America, in the year 1770, I left them with her upon my departure; and before I returned in the end of 1771, for my family, being appointed by the synod to the charge of this congregation, she was called home to her Father's house and country.—And though I was of the judgment that the publication of this godly woman's experiences might be of service; yet such was the shortness of my stay at home, and the hurry which necessarily attended settling of my affairs, that time would not permit me to review and correct them in the manner before-mentioned.

However, as several of her relations, together with others of her most intimate and godly acquaintances, still insist upon these Memoirs being printed, they have, by several letters, requested, that I should write something by way of Preface unto them; though on account of their being so long out of my hand, and espe-

cially for want of them before me, I could not do any thing of this kind with that judgment, that otherwise I might; yet I have so far complied with the request.—I doubt not, that, through the Lord's blessing, they may be useful; and that, as face answers to face in a glass, so the experience of this eminent Christian may be found to correspond unto, and accord with the experiences of the saints who are yet in the wilderness, but on their journey to the better country; and tend to succour their tempted souls, to the increase of their faith, the encouraging of their hope, and enflaming of their love.

If ever, therefore, the Memoirs of this religious Woman shall, in holy providence, come abroad by the press, or into whose hands soever they may come,—that God may be eminently glorified thereby;—the interest of religion greatly promoted;—that the edification of the mystical body of Christ, may very much be encreased;—and that they may be signally blessed to every one into whose hands they come,—shall ever be the earnest prayer of,

Dear Reader,

BROOKFIELD, } Thy Soul's hearty and
in TRURO, *Nova-Scotia*, } sincere Welwisher,
Feb. 4th, 1774.

DANIEL COCK.

P R E F A C E,

BY THE

E D I T O R.

IT will readily be granted, that the perusal of the lives of eminent saints, in which are recorded their religious experiences, of the love, goodness, and condescendency of a gracious and merciful God to their souls, is both a delightful and beneficial exercise. Hereby the reader is acquainted with the high attainments of the truly godly; their various exercises, while in their militant state; the divine support they are favoured with in all their trials; the power and efficacy of sovereign grace upon their hearts, which makes them striking examples of the truth and reality of religion; and that the Lord, in very deed, vouchsafes *to dwell with men on the earth*, and makes them attest the excellency, and recommend to others the religion of the blessed Jesus.

MARION LAIRD, the author of the following Memoirs, was allowed, by all who knew her, to be a very eminent saint, and one that was highly favoured of the Lord.—As she has not acquainted us with any account of the first period of her life, we presume the following short sketch thereof will not be unacceptable to the reader.

Our Author was the daughter of *Alexander Laird*, farmer in Berfern, in the parish of *Inverkip*, about four miles west of Greenock. She was born on the 23d of October 1722. As her parents removed from Berfern to Greenock, in her younger years, so she was educated and brought up in that place, till she was fit for service. She resided, for some time, in the station of a servant, in the family of one *Alexander Parker*, in a place called the Toor, in the parish of *Kilbarchan*: It was there the Lord first vouchsafed himself to her, took a saving dealing with her heart; and where her concern about religion, and her exercise of soul, were first

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perceived. This happened, as she herself informs us, between the beginning of April 1740, and July 1741*.

The Lord, it would appear, in bringing about a saving change upon her heart, brought her first to mount Sinai, and there discovered himself in all the awful terrors of Majesty, prior to his bringing her to mount Zion, and manifesting himself gracious and merciful to her soul, and shewing her the riches and glory of his grace †. She was often, even after the Lord had displayed his loving-kindness to her, left in the dark, on account of his withdrawing his gracious presence from her for a time. She was much harrassed with Satan's fiery temptations; and several times even tempted to put a period to her natural life: But on all such occasions, as she herself informs us, the Lord was a present help in the time of need.

While she enjoyed any measure of health and strength, she was a conscientious attender upon the public and private exercises of religion; enjoyed much of the Lord's sensible presence in them; and often had her soul filled as with marrow and fatness.—Sacramental solemnities were, for the most part, very refreshing to her, and sometimes like the suburbs of heaven: and she carefully remembered the subjects that had been most beneficial to her, and the instruments the Lord made use of as messengers of peace to her soul.—Sabbath-days were generally feasting times to her; when at any time it was otherwise, she was much concerned about the Lord's hiding himself from her, and quite unhappy till he returned and lifted up the light of his gracious countenance upon her soul.—Perusing the scriptures was her daily exercise, and peculiar delight; she appeared to be well acquainted with them, could quote apposite portions of them, upon every occasion, with facility and ease; and seemed to have very distinct views of their true sense and meaning.—Secret prayer was what she had great pleasure in; often got very near access to God therein, and many times he was graciously pleased, in that duty, to reveal to her the secrets of his covenant,

* See Memoirs, page 17, 129.

† Memoirs, page 13, 17. Letter XV. p. 172.

both respecting herself and others.—Meditation, especially upon heavenly and divine things, was her unwearied and delightful exercise; and often when she mused the fire burned, which made her meditations to be very sweet.

Her attainments in religion were very high, and almost singular; and her trials were also very great, and some of them almost uncommon.—She never was in her proper element, but when the Lord smiled on her tabernacle, which was often her happy situation: But generally, after signal manifestations of divine love, and sensible enjoyments of communion with God, the Lord either suddenly withdrew, or some trial or difficulty came in her way to keep her humble; and many times *a messenger of Satan* was sent to buffet her, *lest she should be exalted above measure*. This was always matter of deep exercise to her; and made her quite unhappy till the Lord returned in love to her soul.

She was strongly impressed to commit to writing some account of the Lord's gracious dealing to her soul; but much afraid, lest any thing she had experienced, or might say about it, would but dishonour him, and be an injury to religion, which she was always very tender of.—Her mind, however, was so much impressed to the duty, that she at last prevailed upon herself to essay it: but kept what she had committed to writing a profound secret, till the year 1756, when she was seized with a severe fever, and somewhat apprehensive that it might issue in death; she then acquainted Mr. Cock, under whose ministry she then was, what she had done, and even shewed him her papers. Mr. Cock, on perusing them, encouraged her in her design; desired her, on her recovery, which he expected, to finish them; and, as she acquaints us herself, was at some pains to learn her to write with more accuracy.

In the month of August 1757, she was seized with bodily trouble, which continued to increase for some months: and so accute and sharp did it become, against the month of December following, that her whole body was exceedingly sore pained with stitches, to such a degree, as if so many darts had been stuck into it, and

left remaining there. In this pitiful condition, physicians were of no avail: all the means that were used for her relief, rather increased than alleviated her pain *. —Thus she continued, bound with cords of affliction, in a greater or lesser measure, all the remaining days of her life, which was about thirteen years and three months.

She had not only several presages of the approach of this indisposition, but certain evidences of its being a lengthened-out rod.—During this long period of fore distress, which she bore with unexamplary patience, resignation, and submission to the divine will, she was not altogether without her trials; though the greatest part of it was a time of singular manifestations of the love of God to her soul, by which she was strengthened and encouraged to bear up under whatever the Lord saw meet to measure out for her in the world.

While she was thus confined to the house, and mostly to her bed, for such a number of years, it was her study to spend her time in the best manner she could. Reading, meditation, prayer, spiritual converse with those that visited her, and keeping up an epistolary correspondence, on religious matters, with some select friends and acquaintances, ingrossed the most part of her time.—She had a singularly pious turn of mind; could talk with remarkable freedom and distinctness on religious subjects, and had a very great pleasure therein: She was also well acquainted with vital religion, and the power and efficacy of divine grace upon her heart.

In these years of trouble and confinement, she was visited by great numbers, both of ministers and private Christians, and some of these from a considerable distance.—She improved these opportunities not only in hearing instruction from them, but also in giving very wholesome advices in her turn, especially to young people; which had often such a good effect, as gained their affection entirely to her, to that degree, that they would communicate more of their mind and inward case to her, than they would do to the nearest relations.

* Memoirs, p. 89, 95.

—She had a peculiar talent of delivering her sentiments on any religious point, particularly of adapting herself to the case of exercised persons; and always ready to comfort them with these consolations with which she herself was comforted, when she was in a condition to speak to them: But, she was often, through weakness, and being subject to fainting, unable to speak.

She was never more in her element, than when pouring out her supplications at the throne of grace: she was often there on her own account, and frequently employed, even by experienced Christians, to spread out their case before the Lord, which was no small part of her exercise; and always, when so employed, got something of importance to communicate to them.—She very frequently said, that when she had errands for others to the throne, she always got something to herself: But was always certain, that when she was admitted to the nearest access, and enjoyed the greatest familiarity with God, she might lay her account with being severely assaulted by the enemy.

It was always her ardent desire to have the love of God, above every other thing, impressed upon her soul; and, about three weeks before her death, she was observed to forget many other things, and had *that* as the principal object of her conversation.—Her bodily trouble increased, more than ordinary, for about ten days before her death. The night preceding her dissolution, when three or four persons had come to enquire for her, she desired a Christian acquaintance to pray for a safe passage to her into the land of glory. He signified to her, that he did not expect her departure to be so near: But she insisted on her request.—After he had gone about prayer, he asked her, What she now thought of Christ? To which she replied, “That Christ is my Redeemer, my strength, my fortress, my shield, my portion, my salvation, my glory, my everlasting all, &c.”

She slept but very little through the whole night; but said to those who attended her, that she had solid and agreeable meditations on her blessed Lord. She spoke with elevated pleasure of that scripture, with which our Lord comforted his disciples, John xiv. 2, 3.

I go to prepare a place for you;—but I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. She several times repeated these words, “ I think he is on his way.”—She quoted these words, Psalm xlv. 15. with a holy triumph,

*They shall be brought with gladness great,
And mirth on every side,
Into the palace of the King,
And there they shall abide.*

Her natural weakness continued still to increase, till it became at last very difficult to hear what she said: She was overheard to say, with a very low broken voice, among her last words that were understood, “ O lovely Jesus!—O precious salvation!—O blessed inheritance!”

About a quarter after six o'clock in the morning, on Saturday the 22d of September 1770, she paid the debt to nature, in the 48th year of her age, and fell asleep in the Lord, with the greatest composure, and without the least emotion, just as if she had slept away in himself, it having been difficult, for those who were present, to know precisely when she breathed her last.—So much shall suffice for a short account of the Author of the following Memoirs.

It only now remains that the reader be acquainted, that the following Memoirs are carefully printed from the original manuscript copy; the first, and greatest part of it, wrote by the Author's own hand, and the sequel, after she became unable to write, dictated by herself, and wrote under her own eye, by an intimate acquaintance, still in life.—The publication of them hath been often earnestly solicited for since her death; but purposely delayed, in expectation that the Rev. Mr. Cock, under whose ministry she lived for several years, and who had frequent opportunities of seeing and conversing with her, during the course of her long trouble, would have wrote the Preface, and given a more full and particular account of her, as she had often communicated her mind to him both fully and freely.—But

his going to America has prevented the public of this ; for, after waiting so long, nothing of this nature has come to hand, though desired, and also wrote for.

As a great part of her Christian experience, during her thirteen years illness, is contained in the religious Letters she wrote to some select friends and acquaintances, we have subjoined to the following Memoirs, a collection of forty-seven of these Letters, being all that we were in possession of.

The reader of the following Memoirs is not to expect to have his ear tickled with a flow of fine words and elegant diction ; though her language, and manner of expression, all things considered, is very far from being despicable : But, if the reader be a person, any way acquainted with the power and efficacy of divine grace upon his own heart, he may expect to find what is vastly preferable ; even the genuine sentiments of a pious soul, successfully wrestling against sin, and the temptations of Satan, and deeply exercised to true godliness ; and this will prove, by the divine blessing, solid food to his soul, and be a mean of inflaming his heart with love to the blessed Redeemer, who condescends to vouchsafe his kindness to any of the fallen tribe.

Upon the whole, it may with propriety be said, that MARION LAIRD was a striking instance of the reality, power, and efficacy of religion : And as such singular instances are but very rare, we shall conclude with an anecdote of another very religious woman, who died a little after her, in full assurance, above fifty miles distance from her. The minister of the place paid her a visit on her death-bed, and gives the following account of her. “ Last week, says he, a member of this congregation died triumphantly. She told me, that she “ had no more ado but die ; that all the promises in “ the Bible were on her side ; and that the Spirit of “ God had put them into her heart. She, at my desire, repeated severals of them : my soul was refreshed to hear her.—I asked her whether we should pray “ or praise ? She said, *Praise, praise!*—Her last words

“ were, *Come, Lord Jesus; for I am now ready.*—O
“ that we may have such a passage, says he, by know-
“ ing him ourselves.”

That a careful perusal of the following MEMOIRS
and LETTERS, may have the happy tendency to stir
up many to a serious concern of soul about vital and
practical godliness, is the sincere desire of

GLASGOW, }
Dec. 24. 1774. }

THE EDITOR.

T H E P R E F A C E.

WHEN I began first to write an account of the Lord's gracious dealings with my soul, so far as I can remember, I had not the smallest intention to let any person know of it, till the year 1756, when I was seized with a sore fever, and had no hopes of a recovery therefrom: then I wist not well what to do with them, being uncertain into whose hands they might fall.—After revolving the matter sometime in my own mind, I prevailed upon myself to acquaint Mr Cock of them. So soon as he heard of them, he was very desirous to see what I had wrote: I signified to him, that if he would let none know of it, he should see them.*

When conversing, at this time, with Mr Cock, about what I had written, I communicated also to him, that the Lord bore it in on my spirit, by an irresistible gale of his word and spirit, that he would recover me again from my present distress, and that I must return back again to the world, to be tossed with new winds and waves. This brought me into very great grief for many days, least I should become a wound to religion.—In this very melancholly situation sleep became a terror to me: for, when sleep overtook me, I dreamed I had committed some sin whereby God was highly dishonoured. O the distress this brought me into!—I thought they were well off that got away to heaven without leaving a blot on religion.

Many a time I wondered at the wisdom of God in this matter, in keeping it a secret from me, that he would turn me back into the wilderness again, till I told our minister, Mr Cock: and, in this, I found outward advantages; for he taught me the manner of writing, as carefully as I had been his own child.

* She was at this time under the ministry of the Rev. Mr. Cock, then minister at Crawford's-dyke, near Greenock.

When Mr Cock came to see me again, I signified to him that the Lord would yet deliver me out of this trouble.—He asked me how I came to know that; for, said he, ye are not yet delivered. I told him, that I was persuaded of it.—He said to me, it may be Satan will tempt you to think your deliverance not a mercy. I found this to be true: and I often found the secret of the Lord with him.

Before I proceed to narrate what of the Lord's goodness he has been pleased to vouchsafe unto me, I would here beg leave to suggest two advices to any into whose hands these writings may come.

1. *Do not entertain too high thoughts of me, as if there were any extrinsic excellency naturally in me above others. What induces me to suggest this advice, is, when I have been telling somewhat that God hath done for my soul, they would fall a commending me, as though it had been some good thing in me, beyond others, that procured these things to me. O this grieved me to see the crown pulled off the head of the glorious Redeemer, and set upon the head of sinful self. O Sirs, wonder not at me, but admire the electing love of God upon the like of me, a vile worm. O saints, admire his love, and wonder at the matchless glory and excellency of his person. O the freedom of his grace! O the unsearchable riches of Christ! O the glorious contrivance of redemption through his death and sacrifice! O that I could love him, and praise him more!*

2. *Another advice I would give to them who may have access to see my writings, is this: if they think it will be for the advancing God's honour, and the real good of others, to let them go abroad into the world; I say, if it be judged for the glory of God, and the advantage of others, let them go.—O that I could commend his love to others! and, O that all that hears thereof may fall in love with our lovely Lord Christ!—O Sirs, meditate much upon his love. Many a sweet hour have I had in meditating on his matchless loving-kindness. O it is a sweet field to travel in, till the day break, and all the shadows flee away.*

M A R I O N L A I R D.



M E M O I R E S

O F

MARION LAIRD.

P E R I O D F I R S T.

Containing an account when the Lord first began to take a saving dealing with her, the means by which he effected it, the manner of the Spirit's operation, and the gracious effect thereof; together with an account of the religious connexions she made choice of, with the grounds and reasons which induced her thereto.

IT has been the practice of saints, both in former and later times, not only to keep in memory, but oft-times to commit unto writing, the many instances of the Lord's goodness manifested to them, for the honour of God, to evince the reality of religion, and to edify and comfort fellow-saints. This we find exemplified by the practice of the man according to God's own heart; Psal. lxvi. 16. *Come here all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.* It hath seemed good unto me also to attempt some thing this way.—O that I could so record what God hath done for my soul, as that he may get the glory of all, and that I might take shame and confusion of face to myself; and that others, who hear of these

things might fall in love with glorious Christ, and holiness.—O what great reason have I to wonder and admire at the goodness of the Lord, that did not send me to the pit in the pitiful condition of seeking justification by the works of the law, never remembering what I was by nature! In this unhappy situation I remained until it pleased the Lord to send Mr. Smiton into the West country, in the year 1740. upon the last Sabbath of March, I being then about fourteen years of age.

Mr. Smiton, at that time, preached on these words, *We all with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, &c.* He gave us some marks of these who had seen the glory of the Lord in the glass of ordinances; and immediately it was impressed on my spirit that I had never seen his glory.—He Prefaced on the 80th Psalm; and gave us a very large and free offer of Christ to captive sinners. He called the whole earth, from the rising of the sun, unto his going down, to embrace the Saviour; then I was sure he called me, with the rest, to come to Christ. After urging the call, he said, “Ye have gotten a call to come to Christ this day, and if ye refuse to come, where will ye flee when Christ cometh to take vengeance on them who have not obeyed his voices in the gospel?” He moreover added, “If they that despised Moses law, died without mercy, how much sorer punishment suppose ye shall they be thought worthy of, who have troden under foot the Son of God, and have counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing? There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries; namely, the despisers of Christ.”—He also spoke of the Lord’s having a controversy with the inhabitants of the land: and amongst the many sins he spoke of, he mentioned the breach of our solemn covenants, the burying and burning of them, and the blood of the Lord’s remnant, that was shed, in this nation, for their adherence to the

Lord's truths and cause, and for which the Lord hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land.—Now, I thought I never heard of these things before; and they grieved me all that week.

I heard him preach the next Sabbath-day. He gave us again a very large offer of Christ. He said, "I in the name and authority of my great Lord and master, on the first Sabbath of April, 1740 years, make offer of Christ to every man and woman here; and it will be recorded in heaven, whether ye embrace him or not."—O this was a witness in my heart that I had gotten an offer of Christ, but had not embraced him. And this remained a question with me, what would become of them that had never seen glorious Christ?—When I was meditating on this, all of a sudden my fallen depraved state was more fully laid open to me than what I could well conceive of. I was filled with wonder and amazement, at the dreadful wickedness of my heart, which was like a hole full of serpents when the light of the law did shine upon it. The law said, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.*—Before this time, I thought I had a good enough heart; *But when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died:* and now I saw my heart to be *enmity against God*; I saw I had lost that noble end for which I was created, namely, *to live to the glory of God.* Now I saw myself to be a *condemned criminal*; but I knew not the day of my execution. I thought that there was nothing between me and hell, but the brittle thread of natural life, which could soon be broken at God's command. *I remembered God, and was troubled.* I was filled with tossings to the dawning of the day. And when it was morning, the cry was, when will it be night? and at night, when will it be morning? *The arrows of the Almighty did drink up my spirits.* My case, at this time, was similar to that of the Psalmist, mentioned in Psalm cxvi. 3.

*Of death the cords and sorrows did
About me compass round ;
The pains of hell took hold of me,
I grief and trouble found.*

One time I went out into the fields, so filled with fear of divine wrath, that I thought where will I flee when the Lord will come to take vengeance on them who have not received Christ in the offer of the gospel. I thought, when Christ would come to take vengeance on them that had not obeyed his voice in the gospel, my language would be to the rocks and to the mountains to fall on me, and cover me from the wrath of God and of the Lamb.—O this sin of despising glorious Christ lay heavy on my conscience. And in this dreadful confusion, I durst not sleep, least I had awakened in everlasting flames.

In this perplexed situation, I took my Bible in my hand; but, at this time, it was all alike to me: the first words I looked upon were Psalm cxl. 7. *O God the Lord, the strength of my salvation; thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.* These words were sweet to me for a little time: but thoughts soon arose in my mind, that they were not for such a wretched miserable sinner as I am, who deserved nothing but hell and wrath.—I resolved that I would cry for mercy while I was out of the place where his mercy is clean gone: but thought the Lord might bid me *go to the Gods whom I had served, and let them deliver me*; because when the Lord cried, I would not hear: although he cried to me by the rods of affliction and by his voice in the gospel, I would not listen; so they cried, and *I would not hear, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

At this time, there was a minister of the Associate Presbytery to preach in our bounds, which was both joy and grief to me; for I thought I would get another offer of glorious Christ, and afraid that would heighten my condemnation in hell. The minister prefaced on these

words, *I waited for the Lord my God, &c. Psal. xl. 1.* He observed, "That it was often the lot of the Lord's children to be in the deepest, and fearfullest pits; but the Lord seasonably delivers them, and puts a new song in their mouth, their God to magnify. *A bruised reed he will not break, and the smoking flax he shall not quench: being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun the good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Christ.*"—These words gave me a little hope: and the minister spoke well to my case; for, at this time, I knew so little of God, or his way of dealing with sinners, that I thought none ever was in my situation.—O but the burden of guilt lay heavy on my conscience! whether I went out or in it always haunted me. So perplexed was I, that at one time I drew this hellish conclusion, I even wished I had never known the burden of sin: for I even thought it a wonder that it sank me not down to the pit.—But, O the amazing goodness and condescendence of God, who supported me with his precious word.

At this distressed time, these words were borne in on my mind, 1 Cor. ii. 9. *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard; neither hath it entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* But, alas! I could not believe that God had thoughts of love to me. But then these words came into my mind with power, John iii. 30. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.* O what sorrow did this fill my heart with! for I could not believe; and to have the wrath of God abiding on me, O how did this pierce my soul!—I found however a strong bias in my heart to have life by the works of the law.—O the pride of my heart, it would not bow to the sovereign grace of God.

By this time, my natural strength was much gone; for the arrows of the Almighty drank up my spirits. But this was not all; for, at this time, I fell into a

severe fever, which I imagined would be death to me, and hell after death. *My heart he did bring down with grief, because I wrought rebelliously against him.*—O the confusion I was in during the time of this fever! I cannot tell how little I slept, lest I had awakened in everlasting flames.

There came a young woman of my acquaintance to see me in my trouble: I told her something of my case. She exhorted me to essay believing on the Son of God. To which I replied, I can no more believe then I can remove mountains. She farther said, So might the man say, that had the withered hand; I cannot stretch it out: but he obeyed the command; and power came along with it. So do ye.—To which I replied, I see the holy law of God pursuing me for the debt of perfect obedience.

When I was thus reasoning with myself, these words were borne in on my mind with power, Rom. x. 4. *For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth:* With these words, Job xix. 25. *For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold him, and not another.* O wonderful love! O that I could praise him for his love!

*O that men to the Lord would give
Praise for his goodness then;
And for his works of wonder done,
Unto the sons of men.*

For he hath delivered my distressed soul from death.—O with what joy was my soul filled! I had now peace of conscience and joy in believing.

Before this, I feared that death would come to me, armed with the sting of death, which is sin, to drag my soul to the prison of hell: but now I beheld death to be a vanquished enemy; for I saw that glorious Christ has paved the way to heaven and glory for me. *Thanks*

be to God, which giveth me the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Thus the Lord led me to Mount Sinai, and discovered to me his awful majesty, and that he is a consuming fire out of Christ: and then to Mount Sion, and shewed me the glory of his grace.—The Lord wrought this deliverance for me in the year 1741. I was not only immediately healed in spirit, but in body also; for the Lord rebuked the fever, and it abated. Now, O how sweet was Christ to my soul! I could then have rolled these words as a sweet morsel under my tongue, Rom. viii. 2. *For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* Now it came to be a piece of serious exercise with me, to know whether it was my duty to continue in communion with the ministers of this church, when I consider the backslidings of the present judicatories, in their exercising a lordly power and authority over the heritage of God, by obtruding ministers upon the flock of Christ, in all corners of the land; so that they have scattered the Lord's flock, and made them wander on the mountains in the dark and cloudy day; and obliged Christ's sheep, who know his voice, but will not follow a stranger, to wander from sea to sea, and from one part of the land to another, to hear the pure and good word of the Lord, and many times could not find it.

And, moreover, of late, the Sabbath of the Lord hath been publicly profaned, by the most part of ministers, by their reading the Act of Parliament concerning Capt. *John Porteous*; by the reading of which, the alone headship and sovereignty of the Lord Jesus over his church, has been invaded; and his free and independent kingdom is likewise given up with.—And having likewise subordinated their ecclesiastical meetings, in appointing fasts and thanksgivings, to the civil powers, whereby the Redeemer's crown has been profaned and cast down to the ground.—Now, if it

be the duty of the flock of Christ to flee from, and not to hear strangers, hirelings, and such as the scripture characterizes to be wolves, thieves, and robbers; then I cannot see it my duty to hear them. See Rom. x. 15. *How shall they preach except they be sent?—Yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the Lord, Jer. xxiii. 32.*

P E R I O D S E C O N D.

Containing an account of some dreadful assaults she met with from Satan, her deep exercise under them, and the remarkable deliverances the Lord wrought for her, and the grateful sense she had of his love and favour; together with her concern for the public interest of Zion.

AFTER this the Lord hid his face, and a cloud covered my soul. One night, when I was at prayer, the enemy assaulted me with this temptation, that although I was willing to have salvation through Christ, that Christ was not willing to give it me, though it be a fruit of Christ's willingness to make a sinner willing to embrace himself.—At this time I was ignorant of Satan's devices; and charged the sins of his temptations on myself.

I was, at this time, perusing a valuable little book, intitled, *The meek Christian under the smarting rod*; where I saw an account of a woman who was in affliction, and one asked her, If she was willing to die? She said, I am at God's disposal. When I saw that she was willing to be disposed of by God, O how did this grieve me! For, when I was in the fever, formerly spoken of, I was more desirous to die than to live, whenever the Lord was pleased to give visitations of his love to me, *having a desire to be with Christ, which is far better.* But when I thought on the dreadful

enmity of my heart, and such sinful thoughts of glorious Christ, as to think that he is not willing to give me salvation; when I compared these sins of mine together with the pride and enmity of my heart, such hard thoughts of glorious Christ, I thought they would make up and be guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost. —O with what grief did this fill my soul! I cried to God by prayer, that he would pardon mine iniquities, and forgive my sins: but I found my heart as an adamant stone, not suitably affected for the dishonour I had done to God.

Now, in this perplexity, I fell a searching the scriptures to see what the sin against the Holy Ghost is; and I saw, from Heb. x. 29. that it is a *treading under foot the Son of God, and accounting the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and doing despite unto the Spirit of grace.* Of this however I was not very clear to charge myself with. But when I read Hebrews vi. 5. *And having tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, then I thought this was my case; and I concluded all was but a common work of the Spirit that I had experienced; and I was sore afraid I had committed that sin.* Now I thought, that if I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, *there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.* O how did this fill my soul with horror! And Satan violently assaulted me to take away my own life, seeing there was no mercy for me: at this time I was ignorant of Satan's fiery darts; but charged them on myself, which still increased my trouble. I still abhorred the temptation: but when I was brought to great extremity, it pleased the merciful God to rebuke the tempter. And he said unto me, *Fear not,—I have the keys of hell and of death,* Rev. i. 17, 18. Glory be to God for his faithfulness; who did not suffer me to be tempted, above what he made

me able to bear; but, with the temptation, made a way of escape: and he made me to cry, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief, Mark ix. 24. Now, if it pleased the Lord to manifest himself to me favourably; and I see that my Lord hath the keys of hell and of death in his hand; and that he hath said unto me, *Fear not.* O what is heaven; and what is that state of glory reserved for the saints, when but a blink of him is so sweet! O what will it be to be ever with the Lord! What we feel and taste here, by faith, is a part of heaven's glory: but yet heaven will be an unspeakable surprisal to us when we come thither, for all that. O that I could love him who is *altogether lovely!* O! I see such a beauty in glorious Christ, that it darkens and clouds all other things. I see no beauty in them worth the glorying in; but in my altogether lovely Lord. O that I could love him more! It grieves me I can love him so little, when he is worthy of so much love. I think the presence of God is of a very remarkable transforming nature; and a change of spirit follows it. These things are found to be marvellously assimilating. The sight of God, the felt presence of God, is as a fire which quickly assimilates what is put in it into its own likeness, 2 Cor. iii. 18. They are said to be *changed from glory to glory.* It always elevates the mind; and it is of a very humbling nature. Neither the terrors of the law, nor the fire of hell, ever humbled me so much, as a sight of the glory of God. O that I could give him the glory of all. Wo is me for this idol of self; it would pull the crown off my Lord's head, and set it on the head of sinful self: but, O that he may wear the crown and the throne of my heart for ever. O this indwelling sin! this evil is always with me: the constant residence of it in my heart and nature. *I find a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.*

On the back of this, Satan assaulted me again, with a new temptation. He set the sins of my youth in my

sight, as if they had all been written in a libel; and told me, that they were so numerous, and of such a heinous nature, that God would not pardon them: at which I was sore perplexed. I then went to God by prayer, and cried to him, *O let not the errors of my youth, nor sins remembered be.* — At which the Lord wonderfully condescended to bring me, as it were, nigh to his seat, and filled my mouth with arguments, and allowed me to plead with him as a man doth with a reconciled friend. And I think he said unto me, *Come now, let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow: though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool,* Isa. i. 18.

About this time I heard Mr. Ballantine preach. He observed, among other things, “That the Lord made use of Satan to rub the rust off the graces of his people; and to learn them to make use of their spiritual armour.” And he moreover said, “Ye that are tossed with tempests, read for your comfort Rev. ii. 10. *Behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: Take comfort,* said he, it is but for a limited time, *ten days.*”—This note was very refreshing to me.

Some time after my former happy out-gate from my above-mentioned distress, I found the clouds returning after the rain, and darkness covered my soul; and the Lord hid his face, and I was troubled; and a multitude of vain thoughts filled my heart, and estrangement took place between me and God: and when I went to prayer, I had no liberty; but came away crying, *O wretched woman that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death!*

On the Sabbath day thereafter, I heard Mr. Clarkson preach. He Prefaced on Psalm cxix. 113. *I hate vain thoughts; but thy law do I love.* These words were very refreshing to me; for he held it to be a mark of a child of God, to *hate vain thoughts*, because they are dishonouring to God. And although I could not

say, *I love thy law*, I was sure that I *hated vain thoughts*; for they were my burden.

Next Sabbath he preached at Crosehill, near Glasgow. When he came up to the tent in the morning, he asked us, what we thought of Christ: and said, as your thoughts are of Christ, so is God's thoughts of you. O but this question grieved me sore: for I thought if God had no higher thoughts of me, than I had of glorious Christ, they were but mean and low thoughts. He preached on Job xxiii. 3. *O that I knew where I might find him!* But the Lord hid his face; and these words always haunted my mind, *Let death upon them seize, and down let them go quick into hell.* Whereupon I thought these with whom I had joined sweet counsel to God's house, and were in friendly society with, would come with Christ, to pass the sentence of condemnation against me, although they were the beloved of my soul. Because of the enemy's oppression, I went mourning, till my natural strength was much gone.

One day I was going into a room to sweep it, and I saw a Bible in it: I took the Bible in my hand to read my own doom, as I thought; but the first words I looked on were these, *Cast thy burden on the Lord*: but I passed on to seek the threatening; but the next words I looked on were these, *Because they never changes have, therefore they fear not God.* When I read these words, the Lord so eminently shined on his own word, that he made me to see that a believer's life was a changeable life; a life of absence and presence.

After some time I found a cloud arising, which I may say, as the Prophet in another case, that at first it was as a man's hand; but gradually increased, till it covered the whole heavens, as it were, and hid from me the refreshing and lightsome rays of the Sun of Righteousness: and it was a cloud of the longest continuance that ever I as yet met with in the house of my pilgrimage. So great a deadness seized my soul, that

I could not think that such sins and grace could dwell together; upon which I razed the very foundations.

About this time I heard Mr. Smiton preach. He insisted very much upon the law; and I was sore afraid to hear the law preached, when I could not see my interest in glorious Christ. Whereupon Satan, after all, did so hotly pursue me, that he violently suggested to my soul, that God would suddenly destroy me, as with a thunder-clop; which filled me with great fear, and sore pain; insomuch, that I thought I was under the sentence of condemnation, and had lost all right to any of God's mercies. And the enemy strongly suggested to me, that I should not eat, because I had no right to food; or if I did, the wrath of God would go down with it. This filled my heart with grief and sorrow.

At one time when we were going to take some food, a young man asked a blessing: he spoke a little upon these words, Isaiah xlv. 22. *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else.* Upon which I thought, O! are there such a word as that, that calls all the ends of the earth to look to God, and be saved? I reasoned with myself, Surely that word takes me in; for I would have been glad to be saved both from sin and wrath. The enemy however, strongly suggested to me, that though I had the *external* call, that I would never get the *internal* call of God's Spirit; and without that the external will not do. Oh! I was sore grieved at the melancholy thoughts of having deceived myself: so rude was I, and as a beast before him, that I could not, in this dark hour, live by faith. I was loth to call all that ever I met with a delusion; yet so strong was the temptation, I could not read my evidences, or a title to his favour.

One time I took my Bible in my hand; but I could not find any comfort in it. Whereupon the restless enemy did sorely assault me to burn it in the fire, seeing I could find no comfort in it. To this onset I was

made to say, by the Lord's pity, It hath been refreshing to me before now; and I held it with both my hands: and was made to say, through the Lord's strength, I never will do it.—At this time I would often wonder to see any laugh, that I thought had not an interest in glorious Christ, it was such a burden to me to think of wanting him.

On the Sabbath day I was much burdened with indwelling sins: And, O this is my misery and burden, *When I would do good evil is present with me.* When I design to draw near to God, and promise myself comfort and redress in communion with him, then is evil present. O! could I but enjoy my freedom from it in the seasons of duty, what a comfort would that be! but then is the special season of its operation.—Some times I had liberty in our society, when I could have none in secret; and this made me to think I was nothing but a hypocrite: But this day I could not get liberty either in public or private.

On the Sabbath evening, after our meeting was parted, I went to the fields for prayer, very much burdened with my sin; saying, with the apostle, *O wretched woman that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?* O Lord, I long for victory over it, and that through the blood of the Lamb.—Now, the Lord dealt kindly with me, and rebuked Satan; and he has never suffered me to be tempted above measure, but has, to this day, always with the temptations, given a way of escape.

When I went to prayer, the Lord so shined upon his own word, Isa. xii. 1, 2. *Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid.* O with what joy did this fill my soul! I was filled with peace, joy, and comfort.—In this season of duty, I got all scruples and fears banished away: Now I got my love inflamed; renewed care; deep abasements; increase of strength; a desire to be

with the Lord; and improved mortification to the world.

Some time after this, my spirit was overwhelmed within me, on account of the Church, and for a departing God and glory. Alas! what matter of grief is it to see so few owning a covenanted-work of reformation! So long as our church clave to these our covenants, it fell out with them as it did with king Aſa, 2 Chron. xv. 2. that *the Lord was with them, while they were with him*. But, alas! many are going off these foundations, both as to doctrine and government. The judicatories of this church are so far infatuated, as to thrust out, from church communion and society, faithful watchmen, because of their faithfulness.—This was matter of great grief to my soul: and it caused Christ's sheep, who know his voice, but will not follow a stranger, to wander from sea to sea, and from one part of the land to another, to hear the pure and savoury word of the Lord: and for no other reason, but because of their non-submission to intruders and hirelings, and such as the scripture denominates to be wolves, thieves, and robbers. With many such our pulpits are filled.—And many also were the provocations of sons and of daughters.—And our solemn covenants, where-with this land had bound themselves to the Lord, were too little regarded, by a great many: I myself was witness to hear one of our ministers say, "We of this generation had nothing to do with these old covenants."

All this filled my soul with fear, lest glorious Christ should be provoked not to return again to poor Scotland. And if he would not return with a preached gospel in plenty and purity, we had been the cruel generation who had sinned him away from ourselves, and posterity.

One time, when much perplexed in spirit, I went to prayer; and the Lord was graciously pleased to give me some sure grounds of hope. I got leave to lay

claim to him as a covenant-keeping God, although we be a covenant-breaking people. Ah! when these covenants shall be revived, that shall be like a resurrection from the dead: they were buried in dishonour; but they shall rise in honour. My soul longs to see it.—The Lord has taken possession of the *outmost ends of the earth for his possession*, Psal. ii. 8. to be the Father's gift to the Mediator: it is his own ground by gift, conquest, infestment, and possession. And the Lord bore in on my mind, by an irresistible gale of his Spirit, that he would yet say concerning this part of Sion, *Here is my rest, and here I desire to dwell*. At which my soul cried, So be it, O Lord, although thou shouldst cast us into a seven times heated furnace of affliction.

Another thing that still burdened my spirit was, the want of a faithful minister amongst us, to break the bread of life to our souls. One day after this, our societies appointed a day of fasting: they desired to humble themselves for the many dishonours done to God, by themselves and others; and likewise desired that the Lord would remove all stumbling-blocks out of the way of our getting a faithful shepherd among us.—And here I desire to remark, to the glory of the blessed hearer of prayer, that he sent his word with such power and life into my soul, that it made me believe that our Lord beholds his church with an affectionate concern; for the words were, *I have seen, I have seen the afflictions of my people which are in Egypt; and I have heard their groanings*, Acts vii. 34. *And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, saith the Lord*. Now I got a ground of hope to believe that God would give us pastors in his due time. And I never got leave to raze the foundation of my hope: but one time a very contrary providence seemed to counteract the accomplishment of the promises; then I thought I had believed in vain.—Now, I was afraid that all I had met with was a delusion of Satan: but when I was razing the grounds of my hope, the Lord so eminently shin-

ed upon his word, Isa. lxvi. 5. *Let the Lord be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy.* This revived my hope again, to wait upon the Lord, till he should accomplish his promises; which he did about two years thereafter. And, O but the mercy that cometh to a Christian, through a promise, is sweet.

Some time after this, I heard that the sacrament was to be dispensed at Stirling; at which I was very glad: and many a day before it came, these words haunted my mind, Gen. xxxv. 2, 3. *Put away the strange gods that are among you, and arise and go up to Bethel: together with these words, So much the more as you see the day approaching.* But I desired to put the work back into the Lord's own hand. I looked for a refreshing time at the sacrament; and it had been so to me before. But upon the Saturday my heart-plagues were so strongly raging within my soul, that I was afraid all that ever I met with was but a delusion of Satan: for my heart, I thought, was as hard as the ground I then sat upon; and was sore grieved at the thought of my having deceived myself: And my grief lasted till the Sabbath day. One of the ministers serving a table, spoke upon these words, *This is my Beloved; and this is my Friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.* When I heard these words, I thought, O if I could apply them to myself; I would rather than ten thousand worlds. Whereupon the glorious hearer of prayer was pleased to give me my request; for then the Lord so shined upon these words, *This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend*, that I was made to say, O what wonderful love is this! Well may I say his love is not after the manner of man. O his love filled my soul with wonder, joy, and believing. I rejoiced with joy unspeakable; and arose and came to the table of the Lord. Mr. John Cliland served it; and he spoke on these words, *What is thy petition, queen Esther? and what is thy request? and it shall be granted thee.* He addressed himself to the communicants, and said, What is your request, communicants?

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Is it your request to get indwelling sins subdued? To which I said, Amen, with all my heart and soul: I earnestly want to have my heart-plagues subdued, especially that sin of unbelief, by which I had so much dishonoured God, and was afraid that I would dishonour him again.—But then these words were borne in upon my mind with power, 2 Cor. xii. 9. *My grace is sufficient for thee*; after which, my soul was filled with joy and peace in believing. Again, Mr. Cliland said, “Communicants, ye are at the banquet of wine; what is your petition? have ye any petitions to put up for the Lord’s cause and testimony, and for the gospel to the poor West of Scotland?” At which I was exceedingly glad; for that had been often my petition before this time.—This solemnity happened in the month of June, 1743.

Here I desire to remark, to the praise of the faithful God, who grants us our petitions, and the accomplishment of the promises, that the giving of the promises occasioneth much spiritual joy; and when the promise travellet in birth, and bringeth forth, that occasioneth much more spiritual comfort. O but it is a pleasant matter to behold love making promises, and faithfulness accomplishing them!

*Yea, I remember will the works
Performed by the Lord;
The wonders done of old by thee,
I surely will record.*

PERIOD THIRD.

Containing some account of what befel her under the ministry of Mr M'Cara. Her being seized with a lingering trouble, and what was both distressing and supporting to her therein; with her delivery therefrom.

IT pleased the Lord to give us a minister of the gospel, which was to us great joy, and the accomplishment of the promise to me. The first text that our minister, Mr. JOHN M'CARA, preached on was, Mat. xxii. 4. *All things are ready, come unto the marriage.* O this was a joyful day to me!—Now, I must say, to the praise of the Lord be it spoken, in hearing this minister's sermons, the Lord was so condescending to me, as to discover Christ, and heaven, and glory, in such a manner as filled me with wonder; and he assured me, that all my sins were forgiven. O admirable free grace! O help me to praise him! Praise him, O my soul.—I thought I had sinned him away from me; but, I see he will not stay away.

Although I got my former experiences confirmed by Mr. M'Cara's ministrations; yet I was such a stranger to a life of faith, that whenever the Lord hid his face, I concluded all to be but a delusion. I could not, in the dark hour, live by faith: but, whatever changes I had through the week, I got my case well spoken to on the Sabbath, by our minister.—For the most part, I had a clear summer of sun-shine, till it pleased the Lord to lay his afflicting hand upon me, whereby I was laid under a long affliction; and all thought I was dying, except them who had the secret of the Lord with them; these told me, that *my sickness was not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God*

might be glorified thereby.—It pleased the Lord to continue his wonted manifestations to me under my afflictions: and, by the presence of Christ with me in the furnace, this wilderness of affliction, was made like the garden of the Lord. O pleasant affliction when Christ's presence is in it! This made me often to think, O what matter of a song of praise had I to sing of in my afflictions!

One day as I was in meditation on David's song of *mercy* and *judgment*, Psalm ci. 1.; I wondered how David could join *mercy* and *judgment* together, as matter of a song of praise to God; for I saw so much *mercy* in my afflictions, that I thought I had no ground to sing of *judgment*, but all of *mercy*.—But at another time, when I was meditating on this, immediately it was impress'd on my spirit, had not God of his infinite goodness and mercy, execute *judgment* upon glorious Christ, I would never have had a song of mercy to sing of, but all of judgment.—But, O what sweet matter of a song was this to me, seeing judgment and justice was executed upon glorious Christ, in my law-room and stead! Then I thought I might sweetly join mercy and judgment together, as matter of a song.

Though I enjoyed much of the Lord's countenance in this affliction; yet I had also my trials: One thing that burdened me much was the situation of my father's family, because none of them I apprehended, were seeking after glorious Christ, but my father himself. Many a time I went to the throne of grace for them: and these words came into my mind, as the answer of my prayers, Jer. iii. 19. *But I said, How shall I put thee among the children?* However, I mustered up many objections against all grounds of hope for them. At length these words were borne in with power on my mind, *I will give them a name better than that of sons or of daughters; and I will write upon them the new name of my God, and the name of the city of my God.*—This gave me a ground of hope, that the Lord would

take a dealing with some of them ; on which my discouragement evanished for some time.

During this sickness, I had much ground to be deeply humbled for my obstinacy and rebellion against the will of God. I could not attain to a submission to the divine will. I longed exceedingly to be off the world, where I might be admitted to the nearest access to my Redeemer. O this unmortified heart-plague, self ! O this sinful self, it greatly dishonours God. O that I could put God's glory in its room.—Surely it is as much an act of grace, to be willing to live in obedience to God's holy will, as to be willing to die when he calls us to it. Then the breathings of my soul were, O that my life were spent in his service ! A life spent in the service of God, and communion with him, is the most comfortable and pleasant life that any one can live in this world. O that I could praise him for his love to me, one of the vilest worms.—In the time of my sickness the Lord sweetly manifested himself to me, which made me to cry, O when shall the time of my pilgrimage, and the days of my banishment be finished, that I may get home to my Father's house !

In this sickness, which was long and lingering, although I had much sweet communion with God ; yet I had also many pressures in my soul : and, amidst all my downcastings, I had the roaring lion to grapple with. When the Lord hid his face, I was troubled ; and the enemy would persuade me, that all that ever I met with was a delusion : upon which I razed the very foundation ; I could not, in this dark hour, live by faith.—Upon which I told my Father, and desired that he would cry to God by prayer on my behalf. Accordingly he went out to prayer ; and I cried to God out of the depths : But I was afraid that God would not hear our prayers ; and this filled my heart with grief. O that unworthy, sinful, and wretched I, knew how to commend glorious Christ for his love ! For, when I was at the point of giving over all hope, then Christ

came and stepping in sweetly in these words, Gen. viii. 11. *And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo! in her mouth was an olive-leaf pluckt off: So Noah knew that the waters were abated.* O what sweetness I found in these words! for I was persuaded that my father would come in to me, with the olive-leaf of the promise, that the waters of the wrath of God were abated. And he came in with these words, Rev. iii. 12. *Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the house of my God; and he shall go no more out.* O the condescendence of God, to stoop so low as to pardon a rebel, and be reconciled and pacified to me, after all I had done! After which, my soul was filled with joy and peace in believing; it was a joy unpeakable and glorious, having now got good hope through grace, that though he was angry, yet now his anger was turned away, and he is become my salvation.—O what ground of rejoicing was this to me, to think of my new relation to God the Saviour.

After all, O what shall I say of my unmortified corruptions? I found my heart discontentedly rising against God. *Surely I was as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke.* It was not, however, for the greatness of my afflictions; for I could say in all that sea of sorrow, there is not the least drop of injustice done to me. But I thought every blast of sore affliction would blow me into the harbour of glory, where I might enjoy my Lord without any interruption.—But in this I was mistaken.

When the Lord turned me back into the wilderness again, O how discontentedly did my heart rise against the will of God! O it is a wonder that the Lord did not cast me into hell, for my rebellion against his sovereign will. O I could not win to a submission to his will: but boldly and curiously searching into his secret will. But, O what shall I say of the wonderful condescendence of God to me?—O that I could commend his love to others.

PERIOD FOURTH.

Giving an account of several trials and deliverances that she met with after her recovery; together with what occurrences took place, during the time she remained under Mr. M'Cara's ministry, in the year 1753.

IT having now pleased the Lord to deliver me from my long distress, my great enquiry was, to know what he might mean by this lingering affliction. And so great was the condescendency of God to me, at this time, that he bore in upon my mind these three scriptures; *This is the will of God, even your sanctification*; 1 Thess. iv. 3.—*I shall not die, but live and declare the works of the Lord*, Psal. cxviii. 17.—*Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples*, Isa. viii. 16.—But my heart discontentedly rose against them; and then I found nothing but confusion.

Though the Lord had now delivered me from my long afflictions, yet I reckoned that but a small mercy. O with what contempt did I look upon the world and times things?—The Lord again hid his face; and the body of sin and death got a grip of me: immediately a storm of trying providences comes, and seems to contradict the promises; so that I was tempted to call all the promises delusions: I could not know the real language of the dispensations. The time of the sacrament being to be dispensed drew near, which bred many doubts in my mind; for I knew not what to do.

On the Sabbath that Mr. John M'Cara intimated the sacrament, he said, "That it was a custom, in old times, to release a prisoner at the feast; and he moreover added, who knows but the Lord may release some notable prisoner at this feast? If so, then ye shall have a song in the night, when the holy solemnity is kept, and

gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the mighty one of Israel."—This was good news to me indeed; for it was night with my soul.

On the Saturday night, Mr. M'Cara spoke on these words, *Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it*, Mal. iii. 10. O the sweet intercourse I got with the Lord this night!—When I was going out to the fields for secret prayer, these words came with power, Song vii. 11, 12. *Come my Beloved, let us go forth into the fields; let us lodge in the villages: Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish; whether the tender grape appears, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves.* O how sweet and refreshing were these words to me! O this was a sweet night to me indeed, where I enjoyed communion and fellowship with the Lord! O the love and joy I was filled with! O that I may never forget the communion I had in this place. I may call this place *Ebenezer*, or *Bethel*, where I met with God. O but it was a comfortable night to me; a night wherein my interest in Christ was made as visible to me, as it had been written in golden letters before mine eyes. It is impossible for the tongue of men or angels to declare the joy and comfort I experienced.—O that I could bless the Lord for his loving kindness to me.

About two or three days after this communion, when I was about my ordinary employment, I got leave to view the Spirit of God in every step of my conversion; when, with wonder, viewing this work of redemption, so gloriously displayed, I went out to bless and praise the Lord who had made me to rejoice in his salvation: but, when I was at prayer, the roaring lion did attack me suddenly; and with one of his fiery darts, he wounded me. *My prosperous state was quickly turned into misery.* The enemy suggested to me, that I was

nothing but a hypocrite, for ye only love God for his benefits, not for holiness; which hypocrites do. To which I said, that is a truth, for I know not what it is to love God for his holiness. O how vexing was this to me? I went out rejoicing; but I came in again full of sorrow. O the sudden change I experienced! for a little before, I thought I was as it had been at the suburbs of heaven; but now brought down to the borders of hell: for, since the first day that glorious Christ revealed himself to me, I could never live out of the sight of my interest in him, but in great extremity.

Thus perplexed, I began to examine what length I had come in the way of God; or whether a hypocrite might not attain to all I had, and yet come short of saving grace. I prayed; and so did the proud Pharisee. I converse with the godly; and so did the foolish virgins. I communicate; and so did these hypocrites. I have a delight in seeking the Lord; and so had these, Isa. lviii. 2. I am free of gross out-breakings; and so was the young man, Mark x. 20.—Now, what am I more than these? They can never love God for his holiness; but they may love God for his benefits. This induced me to send many a petition to the throne of grace. But I said, O this is a depth I will never win out of again: but that word still haunted my mind, *For my thoughts are not as your thoughts.* O how shall I testify the goodness of God, who is always a friend in time of need to poor faithless, undeserving, and ungrateful me?

The Sabbath morning, Mr. M'Cara prefaced on Psalm cxvi. 2. *The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow.* And I must say, to the praise of the Lord, he was helped to speak as pointedly to my case, as if he had known all my thoughts.—This day he was God's messenger to me, as many a time he had been, where I have found breathings of the Spirit of God on my soul. *Bless the Lord, O my soul; who redeemeth thy*

life from destruction: Bless him all ye hosts of heaven. And as the Lord shall help me, I shall record what of his kindness I met with at this sacrament.—O that I could so do it as to make every one that heareth of it fall in love with the lovely and sweet Jesus.

I was then under the ministry of Mr. M'Cara, in the year 1753. I desire to remark, to the glory of God, if I could really do it, this being a time of special manifestations, after a dark night of desertion. I may well remember this day with wonder and admiration at the love of God in Christ Jesus. In the morning, when I was at secret prayer, I got near access to the throne of grace, where I got my heart poured out before the Lord, with a great deal of sweetness and composure of spirit attending it. — At this time there was a burden laid on my spirit for the Church: I was afraid that the Lord was about to depart from us; but this morning I got leave to plead with him for the Church, as a man doth with a reconciled friend; and he filled my mouth with arguments. And I desired to be humbled for my own sins, and for the sins of the congregation whereof I was a member; and for the sins of the land which hath provoked the Lord to depart from us. Being thus concerned, O how sweetly was these words brought in on my mind, *Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.* O this made me wonder at his love; for he drew aside the vail, and made me see into the secret of his covenant, whereof I can neither speak nor write to any purpose.

But when I was coming to the ordinances, the great adversary of God and man assaulted me with his fiery darts, in order to keep me back from paying in the tribute of praise which was due by me, to my great deliverer, who had loosed my bands. The enemy suggested to me, that my enjoyments were but the joys which temporary believers or hypocrites may have sometimes in the word. But I think, *joy in the Holy*

Ghost hath an enlarging, humbling, and sanctifying influence upon the soul, whereas the joy of hypocrites hath no such effects.

When I was at the table of the Lord, O how sweet were these words to me, Isa. xliii. 4. *Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable; and I have loved thee.*—O what ground of rejoicing was this to my soul, to have a God in Christ for its reconciled portion.

On the Monday morning, as I was going to the ordinances, my Lord was departed from me, which perplexed me much. I thought, O I have left him at a communion table, not to see him again! There was a room in my soul the whole world could not fill up, without glorious Christ himself: there was a most vehement flame of love in my soul for him, which many waters could not quench. Oh! I could not think of wanting my Lord; I say, I could not think of wanting my Lord again.

Public worship began; and then Mr. Telfer preached on Isa. xxvi. 9. *With my soul have I desired thee in the night; and with my spirit within me will I seek thee early.* In the time of this preaching I got a glorious discovery of my Lord again, with these words, *It is expedient for you that I go away.* Now, I can neither express the joy nor the sorrow I had on my spirit. I got liberty to converse with him as with a loving friend; or as a wife with a loving husband. But, O this filled my heart with sorrow to think of parting with my Lord again. I would rather have died on the Mount, and the valley of vision been my burial place, than come away without Christ.

Mr. Fisher closed the work on these words, *Follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.* He held out Christ to be the believer's leader; and said, "If we had a leader in a strange way, we would readily ask this and that mark about the way at our leader; and would have converse with our leader." O how confirming was this

to me ! yet I came away with a sorrowful heart from the ordinances, because my Lord told me, that *it was expedient for me that he should go away*, and my spiritual enemies were to meet with me again. I cannot but say, to the praise of the Lord, the last day of the feast was the greatest day of it. I never before experienced the like on the last day of a solemnity. This was a time of feasting indeed ! I may well call the place, a *Bochim*, a place of weeping ; or, a *Bethel*, a place where I saw the Lord.

How reprobable then are these ministers at this day, who are for putting away all the preachings about sacramental occasions, but the fast-day and the Sabbath-days preachings, when the Lord has been pleased to give so much of his countenance on these days ? They are depriving poor souls of a feast on these occasions, if it lay in their power to hinder it. They say upon the matter, *Behold what a weariness is it to serve God ? and they have snuffed at it, saith the Lord of Hosts.*

It is to be lamented, that the judicatories of this church are many ways overthrowing these foundations, both as to doctrine and government. Who would have thought that it would have been disputed in Scotland, that Christ, the king of Sion, hath a fixt government in his visible church ? How will ye exhonour yourselves at the hand of God and of Christ, who lay no other burden upon you then this, *Hold fast till I come.*— Poor covenant-breaking Scotland never thinks upon this.

In the year 1754. I attended at the dispensation of the sacrament in Glasgow. On Saturday, I heard Mr. Horn preach on these words, Mark iv. 11. *And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God.* In the time of this discourse I got leave to feed sweetly ; and I had a great desire to hear him again on that text, which I did upon the Sabbath day : but found no sweetness in it : whereupon I might

have seen my sins written upon my judgments, for my limiting the Lord to that text.

After Mr. Horn had finished his discourse, Mr. M'Cara preached on these words, *Our conversation is in heaven.* He spoke of many professors who had a profession of religion, and yet had not their conversation in heaven. He said, that many would come that far in a profession of religion, and not have their conversation in heaven, as those we read of in Isa. lviii. 2. *Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinances of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.* These marks that he spoke of filled my soul with perplexity; for the cloud was so dark that was upon my soul, that I could not see to read my evidences, or a title to his favour: and I was afraid that all I ever met with was a delusion.

By this time, the communicating work of the day was almost over, and I knew not what to do; for I was afraid that I would betray glorious Christ if I went forward to his table. I stood perplexed, till Mr. M'Cara rose to serve the last table. Then these words were born in upon my mind, *Why halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; or if your idols be God, then embrace them.* I could stay no longer, but went to the table. Mr. M'Cara gave some marks of a saving faith, at which I was sore shaken; for the cloud still remained on my soul: but a little after that, it pleased the Lord to draw aside the veil, that I got such a sight as I desire never to forget it again: I saw his heart's love to me from all eternity. O for an heart enlarged as the sand upon the sea-shore to love him: I can never trust precious Christ too much, and myself too little; for I had no thought of such an enjoyment of glorious Christ. O that love of his! When I think on his love, and the enmity of my own heart, O how numbling a sight is it!

Now, when at the table, I got leave to behold his love shining in a cup of red wine. O that I could praise him for his love! Although I had the tongues of men and angels I could not express his love. I think, faith's views of the love of God, and a sight of the enmity of our own hearts, is a very humbling sight.— O that I could praise him for his love: O, he is altogether love. Love him, O my soul.

Mr. James Erskine closed the work. In the time of his preaching I got leave to feast sweetly on the fruit of the blessed apple-tree. The Lord hath been pleased to pain me with his love; and my pain groweth through want of real possession.—O wonderful love to so unworthy, so ungrateful, and rebellious a creature as I am!

P E R I O D F I F T H.

This period presents us with several instances of the deep distress of mind she was brought into, on the Lord's withdrawing himself from her, and Satan's tempting her even to take away her natural life; with the agreeable relief she found on the Lord's return, and how beneficial Mr. Cock's ministrations were to her for this purpose.

SOME time after this agreeable display of the Lord's goodness to my poor soul, I found, on my return home, the clouds arising again, which covered the whole heavens, as it were, and hid from me the refreshing and lightsome rays of the Sun of Righteousness: My heart-plagues also prevailed; and, which was most distressing, the Lord continued to hide his face from me.

Such was the Lord's kindness, however, to me, that I still enjoyed the means of grace: And on the Sabbath day, Mr. Cock preached upon these words;

1 Pet. v. 6. *Humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God.* He spoke of the sins that provoked the Lord to lift up his hand; and also of the sins of not being humbled when God's hand is lifted up.—Then I thought I had not been humbled aright for the enmity of my heart; and I was afraid that such sins and grace could not dwell together.—On this the adversary suggested to me, “That although I was exalted, like Capernaum, to heaven, yet I should be brought down to hell.” I owned that was true, I have been exalted, and little matter of that, although I should be brought down to hell, if I were kept from sinning there.

When I was thus sore grieved, these words came into my mind, Ruth i. 16. *Where thou goest, I will go.* At which I thought, although the Lord should cast me down to hell, he would be there: he is there by his power; his justice is there.

I went still on in my unbelieving thoughts of God, till these words came into my mind with power, *Seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to open shame,* Heb. vi. 6. with 2 Sam. xvi. 17. *Is this thy kindness to thy friend?* O Sirs, he hath shamed me with his kindness. O this pierced my very heart, to think of my having pierced glorious Christ, for which I might go mourning to my grave.—O wonderful love, that ever the Lord vouchsafed friendship to such a rebellious creature as I am! It is a wonder of mercy that he did not cast me down to hell: But full of pity he forgave my sins, and did not slay me.—Then, O how did it grieve my heart, when I thought on my ungratefulness to so kind a Lord! I viewed myself as one that had, with a sword, pierced the heart of a dear friend: and, indeed, Christ is the best Friend. This made me to go mourning when I thought on my dear Lord, how I had wounded him in the house of his friends.

As I was coming from the ordinances, a godly woman that I was acquainted with, asked me, How I was, with a smiling face. To whom I said, "O if ye saw my heart, as God seeth it, ye would never smile upon the like of me." However, my trouble was so great, that I was obliged to take my bed, being grieved at the melancholy thoughts of crucifying the Son of God afresh by unbelief, and putting him to an open shame.—I imagined I had deceived myself; and I was afraid that all I had ever met with was a delusion of Satan: and my Bible became to me as a sealed book.

On the Sabbath day Mr. Cock preached on Psalm lvii. 1. *Be merciful to me, O God; for my soul trusteth in thee.* One note he had was to this purpose, "That although the wicked should lie in hell to all eternity, they could never pay the whole debt owing to the justice of God: but Christ, the glorious surety, was bound to pay the whole debts owing by an elect world, in virtue of the covenant of works; yea, *He magnified the law and made it honourable*, by his obedience: and thus he recovered a title to eternal life." When Mr. Cock was speaking on this note, I saw a bright display of redeeming love, with power, shine in upon my soul; and also a bright display of the sufferings of glorious Christ in my room. I got leave to behold that the angel of the Lord did wondrously in the work of purchasing our redemption.

In the interval of worship, I went to prayer: one of my requests was, that the Lord would come out with his servant, and manifest his glory amongst us. And these words were borne in on my mind with power, Prov. viii. 20. *I lead in the way of righteousness, in the midst of the paths of judgment.* There was a wrestling spirit given me to plead with the Lord; and he filled my mouth with arguments, and allowed me to plead with him as a man doth with a reconciled friend. O that I could love him.—When I came into the meeting house, they sung in Psalm cxvi. from the beginning.

*I love the Lord, because my voice
And prayers he did hear.
I, while I live, will call on him,
Who bow'd to me his ear.*

On which I invited the whole congregation to join with me in loving and praising him for his love.—Again, the glorious hearer of prayer condescended to draw aside the vail, that I might get a sight I would never forget again. O that exceeding great glory that I saw by faith, in the person of the Son of God! O it is an unspeakable glory; I can neither speak nor write about it: it filled my soul with wondering at his love; and that glory so filled my soul, that I thought I could behold no more of it in this clay tabernacle, which made me cry, *O when will the day break, and the shadows flee away*, that I might win to behold his glory, without interposition, within the vail, where no shadows would ever intercept the glorious rays of his blessed face again.—And this display of his glory had an abiding impression on my soul for that whole week.

On the next Sabbath morning, however, when I awakened out of my sleep, my spiritual enemies within my heart raged so, that I was made to cry out, *O wretched woman that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* Mr. Cock preached on the same text he was on the day before: but, O how tasteless was it to me, for as sweet as it was to me the day before? But now, *My Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone.*

Between the forenoon and afternoon's sermon, I went to the place where I saw his glory the day before, in order to pray; but I could not open my mouth: the thoughts of God's being angry with me terrified me: *I found grief and trouble.* His terrible majesty made me afraid.—I sat down astonished. Then the enemy, who is ever watchful for his opportunity, did sorely assault with that temptation, to take away my own life: and the temptation was covered over with

that mask that it would put an end to indwelling sins, which I so much wanted; and this was something agreeable to me: for I could be satisfied to have indwelling sins put to an end, because they are so dishonouring to God, and hurtful to my own soul. And the enemy suggested to me the suitableness of the place, it being a very solitary one at a water-side where none would see me.—O that I could bless the Lord for his faithfulness, who *never suffered me to be tempted above that he made me able to bear; but with the temptation, made a way of escape.* Then these words came into my mind with power, *He that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved,* Mark xiii. 13.; at which the tempter fled from me for a season. Glory be to God, who hath delivered me from the *subtile fowler's snare*; for in that *he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.*

O what need of watchfulness after enjoyments. I think the devil never assaults a Christian more violently, than immediately after his enjoyments: then *the blast of the terrible one is as a storm against the wall.*—At such times ordinarily a Christian loses the grace of fear. After we are in part brought near the King, we should beware of singing the triumph before the victory. When we are brought even within sight of Christ, then we are ready to cry out, *My mountain standeth strong, I shall never be moved.* I suppose, these enjoyments of Christ, that are attended with much spiritual fightings, are usually the longest, the sweetest, and most advantageous.

On the twenty-first day of February, 1755. Mr. Cock preached on Psalm lxxxiv. 7. *They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.* This day it pleased the Lord to give a gracious display of himself to me. One day this week, as I was helped to a very sweet meditation on the love of Christ, he graciously manifested himself to me: I got him in the arms of my faith, on the back of this singular display

of himself and his love. It was however but of a short continuance.

Soon after this I was again violently assaulted by the tempter to take away my own life: he presented to me a knife therewith to do it; no person being in the house but myself. The enemy pursued me so close, that I could not endure so much as to see the knife in my sight, but laid it away. I complied so far; but the power of God kept me from the power of Satan. I was so taken with the temptation, that I did not value my own life, but the glory of God.

One night when I was discoursing with a godly woman, I told her I was sorely pursued by the enemy. She said, ye have need to watch: and moreover she told me of a woman, that was thought to be a godly person, and yet she was left to take away her own life.—O what sorrow did this fill my heart with, for I thought that would be my case! *Horror took hold of me: I found grief and trouble.*

I rose to go to our own house again; but, such a trembling seized me, and a fear of being left to dishonour God, that I knew not what to do. My grief was so very great, that I could scarce walk upon the streets. And as I was coming home, I was violently assaulted by the enemy to go into the sea, and drown myself: but I said, That it would dreadfully dishonour God, and grieve the spirits of the Lord's people.—The enemy replied, That I would do it one time or other. At which I said, Woe is me that ever I made a profession of religion, if I be left to wound it.—The enemy again suggested, The longer ye continue your profession, you will wound religion the more.

When I came to my house, I reasoned with myself how I should enter it, lest the enemy get power over me? But just as I was coming in to it, these words were borne in on my mind, Psalm cxxi. 8. *The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, even for evermore.* Then the echo of my

soul was, *Stablish thy word unto thy servant, who is devoted to thy fear*, Psalm cxix. 38.—I came into my house, and shut the door; and I earnestly begged of God, that he would either rebuke Satan, or uphold me under his temptations. The Lord then seasonably brought to my mind the temptations of our blessed Lord, wherewith the devil tempted him to deny his Sonship, and to devil worship: *And the devil said unto him, If thou be the Son of God, command this stone that it be made bread, &c.* Luke iv. 3.; for, *If these things were done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?* By this I saw, that the dear Son of God's love was not exempted from temptation. And these words much haunted my mind, in Heb. xii. 3. *Consider him who endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.* But, alas! I wanted faith to take the *shield of faith*, wherewith I should be able to quench all the fiery darts of the devil: and to take the *helmet of salvation*, and the *sword of the Spirit*, which is the word of God.

About this time there was great noise of the French armies coming into our land; and great press for men: all which made me sore afraid. When I thought upon our great and grievous backslidings and apostacies from God, and from a pure covenanted work of reformation, and our many abominable practices; no nation in the world hath so far changed their glory for that which is their shame, as we have done, having broken our sacred vows and covenants, burnt and buried them in oblivion, and shed the blood of the saints for their faithfulness in adhering to them: When I thought on all this, I was sore afraid that the Lord might come out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquities; and even send in a bloody sword to avenge the quarrel of his broken covenant.—By this the enemy got great advantage over me: for he violently assaulted me with his fiery darts, and suggested to me, that it was better to fall by my own hand, than by the

hands of the uncircumcised Philistines, lest they come and thrust me through and abuse me.—To which I replied, Little matter of that, were I kept from sin, and from dishonouring of God.

One night as I was in my melancholy case, it pleased the merciful God to send in these words upon my mind with power, Dan. vi. 20. *O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou serveest continually able to deliver thee?* This might have shamed me out of unbelief. The apostle, in Eph. vi. 16. calls faith the *soul's shield* against temptation: and it is called the *victory by which we overcome the world*, 1 John v. 4.; the *sword*, or *weapon*, by which we achieve our victories. And if so, then unbelief, cursed unbelief, disarms us of both *sword* and *shield*, and leaves us naked of defence in the day of battle. At this time these words, Psalm lxxiii. 24. were powerfully brought in on my mind,

*Thou, with thy counsel, while I live,
Wilt me conduct and guide;
And to thy glory afterward,
Receive me to abide.*

These words brought a time fresh to my mind wherein I acted very sinfully, while I attended on the sacrament at Glasgow, dispensed by Mr. Fisher. I came from hearing sermon at the tent, into the church, with a design of going to the table of the Lord; but when I came in to the church, I got a seat, and sat down, and I thought I would sit till the last table: But, by this conduct, I so provoked the Lord with my sin, that he let loose the enemy, in his righteous judgment, to fill my heart with blasphemous thoughts of God, which I forbear to speak of here. Let none prefer seats, or any external conveniency, to the work of the Lord, on such solemn occasions.—I rose however and came to the table of the Lord; but with a worse frame than when I sat down: The Lord, however, was very merciful to me; and was pleased gloriously to manifest

himself to me, in the breaking of bread.—O wonderful love of God, that he should love such an unlovely wretch as I am; who, a little before, had my heart filled with enmity against him. Now I was made to look upon him whom I had pierced, and was made to mourn; and I was sore afraid that I would dishonour him again: But when I was thus grieved for my sin, and afraid lest I should offend him more, those words were again borne in on my mind with power, Psalm lxxiii. 4. *Thou wilt guide me with thy counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory.* I found such a sweetness in these words that I was made to cry in my heart, O the plaister is as broad as the sore. I saw such a fullness in these refreshing words, they being both an ample security for time and eternity, that I was made to feast deliciously upon them: and many a time since they have been very savoury to me; and even now, in the time of this sore combat with the enemy, they have been very refreshing to me also.

This sore conflict with the enemy lasted about two weeks: then it pleased the merciful God to rebuke the tempter. And about that time, for the space of other two weeks, a great deadness seized me; and I had no liberty in prayer. When I went to my devotion I was often so seized with sleep that I could scarce open my mouth in prayer to God.—This made me to think upon my former ways; and I saw that I had justly provoked the Lord to depart from me, by the sin of unbelief: For, although the Lord said in his word, *Henceforth thy goings out and in, God keep for ever will*, yet I did not believe his word. I really thought I would fall a pray to the enemy one day or other.

The first Sabbath I could not go to the ordinances, although they were the very joy of my heart, my trouble was so exceeding great.—The next Sabbath I heard, but could not apply. Mr. Cock then preached upon Psal. lxxxiv. 7. *They go from strength to strength, till they appear before God in Zion.* One note he had

was, "That he knew not a sin but a believer might be tempted to commit it."—This note was a little sweet to me; for I thought, if I had not been a believer in Christ, I would not have been so much tempted by the devil.—But still *the comforter that should relieve my soul was far from me.*

The next Sabbath-day Mr. Cock was on the close of his discourses on the fore said text. In the application he said, "Because of the sins of believers, estrangement took place between the Lord and their souls; and they become like strangers to one another."—At which my soul cried, "O Lord, send on the body what thou wilt, but take not away the light of thy countenance from my soul." And it grieved me sore that I had sinned away the Lord from my soul. I thought that I was like Adam in the first temptation; for he believed the devil more than God; and so did I: instead of honouring God, by believing in him, I dishonoured him by unbelief.—And this brought to my mind a note of Mr. M'Cara's; when he was speaking of the sins that provoked the Lord to withdraw the light of his countenance, he said, "Because they sided so much with the house of Saul against the house of David, and did bear false witness against the Spirit of the Lord, in their own souls; for which the Lord was provoked to let them go long mourning without the sun."—When I reflected on this, O how did it pierce my very heart, to think how often I had sinned against the Lord?

When I was thus sore pained, all on a sudden, a bright display of redeeming love did, with power, shine in upon my soul, that I was filled with wonder, at the amazing good-will of God to such a rebellious, unworthy, ungrateful, and rebellious a creature as I was.—I came home wondering at his love; and my mouth was filled with praise, and my soul with joy. I thought I never could praise God enough: whereupon I resolved to sacrifice to him the sacrifice of thanksgiving, for

my great deliverances. For this purpose, I went to a secret place, where I was often wont to go for prayer: but, at this time, Satan had almost afrighted me from it. So strong, however, were the impressions of divine love, that I thought, tho' there had been a hell of devils there, I would not have been very much afraid of them; for I saw the Lord to be more of might by far than whole legions of them.

At this time it pleased the Lord to double the vision, and gloriously to manifest himself to me again. O the exceeding greatness of that glory that so filled my soul, that I could do no more but wonder at it for a little time!—I again invited all things in heaven, and all things on the earth, to join with me in my melodious song of praise to God for his love. O the fulness that I now saw in glorious Christ to supply all my wants!—Yea, I thought if it had been but possible for me to have suffered ten deaths, rather than to have glorious Christ's face clouded again from me, I would have cheerfully submitted thereto: but, Ah! it grieved me fore, that I could love him so little. *He is altogether lovely.*—This Sabbath was March 17th, 1755.

The next subject Mr. Cock preached upon was Rev. iii. 1. *I know thy works, that thou hast a name, that thou livest, and art dead.* The doctrine that he observed was to this purpose, "That there is a generation of men and women, who have a name that they live, and yet are amongst the congregation of the dead." Among other things, he said, "Ye will think it a hard thing for me to say to you that ye have a name to live, and yet want the thing signified by it:" the name is BLASPHEMY; *I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not,* Rev. ii. 9.

This last week of April, 1755. was the most remarkable for signal manifestations of his glory I ever before beheld: from Sabbath to Sabbath I had a heaven upon earth; I never experienced the like of it. *I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his*

fruit was sweet to my taste.—One morning, when I awoke out of sleep, *My Beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone*: whereupon I, like as the hart for the water brooks so panted my soul after more and more communion with God. Upon which those words were borne in on my mind with power, John xvii. 24. *I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory.* There was such a glory shined forth brightly in these words, that it filled my soul with wonder. Now I saw my will that was once wholly rebellion against God, and glorious Christ's will, sweetly complying together: for he has said, *I will that they may behold my glory*: and my soul sayeth, So be it, O Lord. And these words in Luke i. 28. *Hail thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee*: and Jeremiah xxxi. 3. *I have loved thee with an everlasting love.*—O Sirs, this is the cause of all, *his love.*

On the 27th of April, 1755, Mr. Cock preached on Rev. iii. 1. *I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest and art dead.* When he read out the text I looked up to God, and earnestly begged, that he would let us see what our name is, whether it be amongst the living, or amongst the dead; whereupon I thought the glorious hearer of prayer seemed to say unto me, *Because I live, ye shall live also.*—Between the intervals of public worship, I had a desire to go alone to praise him for his love: tho' I cannot praise him aright. I went to a solitary place for prayer: and there was such a concern laid on my spirit for the church, I almost forgot myself. There I was made to weep before the Lord, for our great and grievous defections, and apostacies from God, and from a pure covenanted work of reformation; for which I fear the Lord is pleading a quarrel with the inhabitants of the land.—When I was weeping for those sins, these words were borne in on my mind with great power, Isa. lxii. 4. *Thou shalt no more be termed, FORSAKEN; neither shalt*

thy land be any more termed, DESOLATE: but thou shalt be called HEPHZI-BAH, and thy land BEULAH: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married; together with those words in Hosea ii. 16. And it shall be at that day, saith the Lord, that thou shalt call me ISHI; [that is, my husband;] and shalt call me no more BAALI; [that is, my Lord.] O this made me ashamed, and to blush before the Lord, to think of his love to this poor backsliding and covenant-breaking land; for the sins whereof the Lord seemeth to be about to avenge the quarrel of a broken covenant, by a bloody sword: yet I got leave to lay claim to him as a husband to the church, and to myself also. O how sweetly were these words borne in on my mind, Jer. ii. 2. *I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals?* To which I said, My love is not worth the remembering; but, O that I could praise thee for thy love: *Not unto me, not unto me, but to thy name be the glory.* — O! the sight of his blessed face, and the smell of his precious garments allured and ravished my heart. *He brought me to the banquetting-house, and his banner over me was love. His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely.* It grieved my soul, that I could not love and praise him more for his love.

For the most part of this week, I got leave to delight in his love. O the many sweet meditations I got of his love, which made me to cry, O that time would fly away, that I might win to the enjoyment of my Lord within the vail, where no mountains of Bether, would hide me from the light of his glorious countenance again. — Those words haunted my mind very much, Gen. xxxiv. 1. *Remember Dinah, Jacob's daughter, how she went out to see the daughters of the land.* — I took these words to be a caution to beware of giving my heart to any other lovers than glorious Christ to ravish it, by giving them the throne in my heart, and so provoke him to withhold the light of his counte-

nance from me. For the most part of this week I got leave to dwell upon his love.—One thing I must remark; and, O that I could do it to the praise of the Lord, those glorious manifestations which I got of himself, greatly mortified indwelling sin, and filled my soul with joy and peace in believing.

The next Sabbath Mr. Cock prefaced on Psal. xxvii. 6. *And now shall mine head be lifted up above mine enemies round about; therefore will I offer in his tabernacle sacrifices of joy: I will sing, yea, I will sing praises unto the Lord.* I was very desirous to hear him upon these words, because about a year before, when I was in trouble, these words were borne in upon my mind. This was a time of great deadness which made me to cry, *O wretched woman that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?* But these words gave me some hope in my bondage, and some small expectation of some victory over my spiritual enemies.

But my trouble did increase, and the thoughts of death afrighted me: *I found grief and trouble.* By this time I had lost sight of the promise, and of the glorious manifestations of God's love; this made death very frightful to me: but when I was brought to great distress, it pleased the Lord seasonably to send in these words with power upon my mind, Isa. xliii. 2. *When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee.* These words had such a power in them as made me to say, *O! It is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.*—By this time I could look death broad in the face. Now I thought these words in Psalm xxvii. 6. were accomplished, *Mine head shall be lifted up above all those that are my foes.* I got a sight of victory, through glorious Christ, over all mine enemies; and these words were sweetly made out to me. And when Mr. Cock prefaced on these words, he applied them so close to my case, that they were very comforting to me, and confirmed me in my former ex-

periences. O this was a day of the gladness of my heart: for, when he came to the application of the doctrine, he gave some marks of them whom *the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.* These words having been very sweet to me in former times, the Spirit of God, witnessing with my Spirit, I came to reflect comfortably upon by-past experiences of his love to my soul; and, by the immediate shining of the holy Spirit upon his own graces implanted in my soul. O with what joy, peace, and believing was my soul filled with!—But I was grieved to see so few putting honour upon glorious Christ, by believing on him. Glory, glory be to God for the dispensation of the gospel, discovering life and salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

On the 18th of May, 1755. Mr. Cock preached on Psalm lxxxvii. 7. *All my springs are in thee.* O glorious day of the gospel! And glory be to God I got leave to apply the love of Christ, and the promise sealed with the blood of Christ. Why does sin prevail so much, but because we believe the love of Christ so little.—O for more faith and more love in him, who is *altogether lovely.*

After this glorious display of God's love, the enemy violently suggested to me, That the Lord would bring forth all my writings, at the day of judgment, as so many witnesses against me. At which I was a little shaken; yet I had no inclination to dishonour God by unbelief. These words came in to my mind, That Satan is *a liar from the beginning, and the father of liars.* O that I could bless the Lord for it, who did not withhold the witness of his Spirit to bear witness with my spirit to the truth of what I had written: and I got leave to delight myself in his love again for some time. And when my conscience accused me for any sin, I got liberty to apply the blood of Christ afresh for justification and sanctification.

Some time after this, the enemy gave me a new on-

set; and told me, I was a great fool to make application to Christ's blood, for I could have no benefit by it, seeing I had profaned it, by often coming to it with my sins: and therefore the Lord would reject my confidence in the blood of Christ. Alas! this filled my soul with grief and trouble: I thought I could be content to die a beggar at mercy's door, if I might win in: but I thought my hope of mercy was gone for ever, if the Lord had rejected my hope in and thro' the meritorious virtue of the blood of the *Lamb slain, before the foundation of the world.*

By this time my distress was so great, that I was afraid I would be deprived of the exercise of my reason, and my religion come to be ridiculed by the profane world: *The arrows of the Almighty did drink up my spirits night and day.* Whilst I was thus in the fearful pit, and sinking in the miry clay, these words came into my mind, and *I will give thee the morning star, to find out the depths of Satan's arrows.* I took my Bible to see the words; but when I found them, they did not read that way, and this grieved me also; for I thought the words came from Satan: and I was foregrieved at the melancholy thoughts of having deceived myself so long. The enemy did again violently assault me to curse God for his way of dealing with me. But this I rejected with abhorrence, and said, No, no. Shall I employ my tongue in cursing of God, when, not many days ago, I could not get him praised enough, who is exalted above all blessing and praise, and on which I invited the whole creation to join with me in my melodious song of praise? No, no: I would rather want my tongue than to have it employed in cursing of God. Then those words came into my mind, *The Lord is mighty to save to the uttermost: with Zech. iii. 1. And he shewed me Joshua, the high-priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right-hand to resist him.* This being the Sabbath morning, I had a desire to go to the ordinances; but by reason

of the great grief of my soul, my body was as it had been in a fever. However, I thought it possible I might get some comfort at the ordinances, and accordingly I went; but when I was come, the enemy assured me, that the minister would not get leave to speak a word of comfort to such a hellish brat as I was, who had so often profaned the blood of Christ. During the time of sermon, the enemy sorely oppressed me; but he who giveth *power to the faint*, and *increaseth strength to them that have no might*, supported me: when the minister was praying; I say, when he was praying, he prayed so much for the tempted, that the Lord might be with them, when they passed through the waters of affliction, and fiery trials of temptation, that should try them, as though *some strange thing happened unto them*, 1 Pet. iv. 12. There came such a divine power along with those words, as made me to say, O the infinite wisdom of God; it hath out-witted me and Satan both. Now I knew that it was the Lord that gave direction to his servant to speak a word in season to me, for he knew nothing of my distress. *O that men would give praise to the Lord for his goodness.* And, O that I could praise him who hath *delivered my distressed soul from death.* All this week I got not a single blink of his countenance except one, which was when we were met for social prayer. I got a blink of him who is altogether lovely. It was very short, but extremely sweet: I got leave, however, to meditate on his word.

The next Sabbath, being the 9th of June, 1755, Mr. Cock preached on Psalm xxii. 31. *They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this.* The doctrine was to this purpose, “ That it is the duty of the present generation to tell what the Lord hath done to the rising one; and it is the duty of the present rising generation to mingle faith with hearing—tell what God hath done to the former one: and it is the duty of e-

"very succeeding generation to tell the following one, "what this glorious Doer hath done."—This day was a very gladsome day: O that I could give honour to him for his love. This day I got liberty to say, *My Beloved is mine; and I am his: The Lord is my rock, my fortress, my deliverer, my God, in whom I will trust.* I am persuaded, that while unbelief reigns and rules, the soul speaks in a quite other strain. Unbelief puts away the love of Christ from itself; and Satan gains his point so long as he can tempt to continue in unbelief. But, I suppose, that so far as unbelief is broken in its reign and rule, so far does the soul bring home to itself this giving love of Christ. O give me one love-token after another, *till the day break, and the shadows fly away.*

PERIOD SIXTH.

Containing some account of her attending several sacramental solemnities during the summer season; with what was both distressing and joyful to her on these occasions: together with what struggles she had with the enemy, and the relief she experienced on the Lord's seasonably interposing; which concludes the year 1755, a year remarkable for many fiery temptations, and also of glorious manifestations.

THE sacrament of the Lord's supper being to be dispensed at Stirling, on the second Sabbath of June, 1755, I resolved to attend. On the Saturday Mr. Patison preached on Luke xxii. 19. *This is my body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of me.* The head of the doctrine he illustrated was, *The benefits that believers have in feeding upon Christ's broken body.* He said, "My friends, ye have the benefit of having all your outward senses exercised, 1 John i. 1. *That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have*

looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life." In the time of this excellent discourse, I got leave to feed sweetly on his person, on his love, on his covenant, on his purchase, on his righteousness, on his fulness, &c. Before this sacrament, these words were borne in on my mind, 1 Sam. ix. 13. *Now therefore get you up, for about this time ye shall find him:* with these words, Gen. xxxv. 1. *Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there:* with Song vii. 12. *There will I give thee my loves.*—O sweet saying: There was such a bright display of redeeming love shone in with power upon my soul, with these words, as kindled a most vehement flame of love to him who is altogether lovely; and filled me with a desire to shew forth the Lord's death, and to embrace the very first opportunity to do it. But this Saturday night the Lord hid his face, and my heart-plagues prevailed. This night I had a prodigious struggle, and battle with Satan, and unbelief, and a wandering heart, that I could not get liberty in prayer as I used to have. For some time before this I knew little about a wandering heart in the time of duty.

On the Sabbath morning I knew not well what to do, for I could get no liberty in prayer: but, as I was going to the ordinances, I got leave to meditate on Christ's love; and when I remembered his by-past loving-kindness, it constrained me to go to the first table to shew forth the death and dying love of Christ. When I sat down at the table of the Lord, the corruptions of nature prevailed to such a degree that I abhorred myself: But then, O how sweetly were these words borne in upon me? Song iv. 1. *Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair.* O wonderful love that ever he loved so vile a creature as I am. O that I could praise him for his love, who is altogether lovely.

Mr. Erskine preached on Eph. v. 2. *And hath given himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God, for a*

sweet-smelling savour. During the sermon I got leave to hear with application to myself.—Hence see the infinite evil of sin, which nothing could expiate but Christ's giving himself a sacrifice for us. We may see the greatness of the sore by the greatness of the gift. He is the glorious giver.—I was allowed to hear sweetly: but in the time of receiving, I wanted the assurance of sense. This made me to think that I had kept some sins in my heart, for which the Lord withheld the light of his countenance. I was induced to think that I had made little conscience of examining myself; and I thought I had mourned so little for sin, before I came to the Lord's table, that it was no wonder though he withheld the light of his countenance from me.

At the dismissing of the table I went out to the tent, where I heard Mr. Cock on these words, Job xxxiv. 32. *That which I see not, teach thou me.* He spoke sweetly of the mysteries that Christ taught the believer: and I cannot say but I got liberty to make application. But, ah! I wanted the sweet sensible enjoyment of him who is altogether lovely. There was a want in my soul which the whole world could not make up, without the enjoyment of my Lord. I could not find him there.—Thus perplexed, I came into the meeting-house again. Mr. Pattison was going to serve a table: then it pleased the glorious hearer of prayer, to draw aside the vail, and to discover to me his glory; *He brought me to the banquetting-house, and his banner over me was love.* Then I was disposed to say, *Stay me with flaggons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love. My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.*—O that I could love him. O the sweet armful I got of glorious Christ by faith! O that I had never lost the sense of his love again. I then thought, if I had a thousand hearts, they should all be employed in loving and praising Christ for his love. O that I pained my very heart that I could not love

looked upon, and our hands have handled of the word of life." In the time of this excellent discourse, I got leave to feed sweetly on his person, on his love, on his covenant, on his purchase, on his righteousness, on his fulness, &c. Before this sacrament, these words were borne in on my mind, 1 Sam. ix. 13. *Now therefore get you up, for about this time ye shall find him:* with these words, Gen. xxxv. 1. *Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there:* with Song vii. 12. *There will I give thee my loves.*—O sweet saying: There was such a bright display of redeeming love shone in with power upon my soul, with these words, as kindled a most vehement flame of love to him who is altogether lovely; and filled me with a desire to shew forth the Lord's death, and to embrace the very first opportunity to do it. But this Saturday night the Lord hid his face, and my heart-plagues prevailed. This night I had a prodigious struggle, and battle with Satan, and unbelief, and a wandering heart, that I could not get liberty in prayer as I used to have. For some time before this I knew little about a wandering heart in the time of duty.

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At the dismissing of the table I went out to the tent, where I heard Mr. Cock on these words, Job xxxiv. 32. *That which I see not, teach thou me.* He spoke sweetly of the mysteries that Christ taught the believer: and I cannot say but I got liberty to make application. But, ah! I wanted the sweet sensible enjoyment of him who is altogether lovely. There was a want in my soul which the whole world could not make up, without the enjoyment of my Lord. I could not find him there.—Thus perplexed, I came into the meeting-house again. Mr. Pattison was going to serve a table: then it pleased the glorious hearer of prayer, to draw aside the vail, and to discover to me his glory; *He brought me to the banquetting-house, and his banner over me was love.* Then I was disposed to say, *Stay me with flaggons, comfort me with apples; for I am sick of love. My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.*—O that I could love him. O the sweet armful I got of glorious Christ by faith! O that I had never lost the sense of his love again. I then thought, if I had a thousand hearts, they should all be employed in loving and praising Christ for his love. O it pained my very heart that I could not love

him more. Mr. Pattison proceeded to serve the table: and he said many a time, *What do ye want?* But I thought he spoke not a single word to me, who wanted a heart to praise him for his love.—I renewed my consent to the bargain: so that I was content to take up the cross and follow the blessed Redeemer in any manner he pleased to dispose of me. At this time I had such a sense of the love of Christ and his beauty, and of my own vileness and loathsomeness, that I cannot express. This was as remarkable a day of power to me indeed as ever I felt: for I saw that it was the Spirit of the Lord, speaking by his servants, which brought alongst with it a power to make me willing.—Now I was like a new come-out traveller in vigour and strength: I leapt over walls and mountains of difficulties. This pleasant life I enjoyed for a little: but, alas! these days were but few in number. I soon met with a sore temptation from Satan.

Mr. John M'Cara's sacrament at Bruntshields, was dispensed fourteen days after Stirling, also in the year 1755. Between these two sacraments I had some sore assaults from Satan: but I got also some sweet meditations of the Lord's loving-kindness, in the intervals. Upon Saturday Mr. Cock preached on these words, Zech. xiii. 1. *In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.* Mr. James Erskine was much on *the crucifying of Christ.* But all the time I could not get a view of glorious Christ, and this grieved me much; for I thought I had sinned him away from my soul.—On the Sabbath morning I was sore troubled because the Lord hid his face; and this led me to take a more close view of my heart-plagues. And I got a discovery of the sin of unbelief; and thought it was the sin for which the Lord hid his face: especially one day I recollected in the time of Mr. Cock's sermon, by the violent assaults of Satan, and my own unbelieving heart, I could not believe that the Lord

would love the like of me, a black lump of hell; and so concluded hell would be my portion for ever. At this time I got such a clear view of my sin of unbelief, as though I had crucified Christ in Crawford's-dyke. Oh! this grieved me sore to think of the wounds I had given to glorious Christ. At this time these words were borne in on my mind, Heb. vi. 6—*Seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh.* Ah! I sinned against light. O that abominable sin of unbelief, which parts between Christ and the poor soul. Then I thought, O if I had but one blink of his glorious countenance again: but I have sinned him away from my soul.

Mr. M'Cara's action-sermon was on 1 Pet. iii. 18. *For Christ also hath once suffered for sins; the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.* He spoke much of the sufferings of Christ; and the whole of it was a remarkable discourse. When he had served the first table, he invited the people to come speedily to the second: and to encourage them, he said, "God will not lay his avenging hand upon you; for he hath laid it upon Christ: he beheld the blood of the covenant, and he laid not his hand upon them: *And they saw the God of Israel, and there was under his feet, as it were, a paved work of sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness:—also they saw God, and did eat and drink.*" He said to believers, "There is no fear tho' ye be under a cloud, it is not a cloud of wrath, *Exod. xxiv. 10, 11, 18.*" O the majesty that I saw in these words! there was such a power came along with them, that it had a favour for many days; for I got leave to make application of them to myself. Then I resolved to go to the table of the Lord with both joy and sorrow; sorrow for my sins, and joy that God had laid his avenging hand upon Christ, and therefore he would not lay it upon me. I went to the table in the faith of it, wondering at the love of God; and he sweetly manifested

himself to my soul. O that I could praise the Lord for his love.—When I was about to remove from the table, I was sore afraid that I would again dishonour God by unbelief, or by complying with Satan's temptations. However, I was enabled to take a new gripe of the promise that I got in the time of temptations before. The word of the Lord is the ground of my hope. And when I was coming away from the table these words came sweetly in my mind, *Fear not to go down to Egypt; for I will surely bring thee up again.*

One Sabbath-day in the month of August, 1755, Mr. Cock preached on Jer. iv. 2. *The nations shall bless themselves in the Lord, and in him shall they glory.* One head of the doctrine was to speak of the *seasons* that we are to glory in the Lord. Among the many seasons he mentioned, that we were to glory in the Lord, the time of *trouble* was one:—the time of Satan's *temptations* was another:—and a third when the *law* came for the *debt of obedience*. On this head he observed, “That the ghost of the old husband is sometimes as “frightsome as the husband itself.” But when this is the case, he told his hearers, they might say, “O “law, thou hast gotten more glory from Christ, my “husband, than if I had stood in the state whercin I “was created: for, he who made the law, hath *magnified the law, and made it honourable.*”—Another season that we were to glory in the Lord was at *death*; because Christ hath unstinged death; *O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*—A fifth season that we were to glory in the Lord was in view of appearing before the *judgment-seat of Christ*. We are to glory in him then because he is near of kin unto us. —O that I could praise the Lord for such a day. I must acknowledge, that this was one of the most glorious days that ever I beheld: it was like an emblem of heaven; for the glory of the Lord so filled my soul, that I got liberty to glory in him as my Husband, as my Redeemer, and as my near Kinsman. O that I

could bless him for the gospel of Christ, being an account of his love, and the greatest proof of it. I believe his love with application to myself; and I desire to be in him.

The next Sabbath morning, as I was going to the ordinances, the adversary suggested that I would fall a prey to him one day or other, and so wound religion. At this I was sore grieved; for I knew, that by the deceitfulness of my own heart, and the temptations of Satan, I would fall a prey to him, if the Lord did not uphold me. But then, O how sweetly were these words borne in upon my mind, Psalm cxxi. 3. *He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; he that keepeth thee will not slumber.* O how sweet were these words to me? for I got leave to glory in the Lord as my keeper. This was a day of power indeed, as ever I felt: I saw that it was the spirit of the Lord speaking by his servant. —O that I could bless the Lord that ever he brought me under Mr. Cock's ministry; for he has often been the minister of Christ to my soul.

The sacrament was to be dispensed at Glasgow, August 31st, 1755. Some time before this, I was under sore affliction for some time; and my trouble was so very great, that I thought it might be death. Whereupon these words came into my mind with power; *For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come; and will not tarry.* O when will that little while pass away? O when will all these shadows flee away, and that day come when I shall have uninterrupted communion with thyself, and no doubts about the truth of promises, no faint views, no questioning our interest in them, but then a day without a cloud in it, or a night to follow it? O come my lovely Lord Jesus, come speedily.

I saw it to be a rod, however, in the hand of a loving Father. But, one thing that grieved me was, I thought the Lord was chastizing me for sins formerly committed in attending on ordinances; on account of which I thought the Lord might keep me away from

the sacrament which was at hand. But it pleased the glorious hearer of prayer to bear in on my mind, by his word and Spirit, that he would both deliver me from my trouble, and bring me to the ordinances. And so it fell out; for I got a very remarkable deliverance from my trouble, and I went to the sacrament.

On the Saturday I got leave to hear with application. But on the Sabbath morning, these words haunted me, *Exod. xxxiii. 3. I will not go up in the midst of thee, for thou art a stiff-necked people; lest I consume thee in the way.* Oh! how did these words grieve me? I could not think of his wrath flaming against Israel.—I went to prayer, crying, *See, O God, our shield; look on the face of thine anointed dear, thy dear Son;* with many more petitions; but found no comfort. I was sore grieved for the congregation, lest the Lord should make a breach upon us, as he did on the sons of Aaron, because they offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not: *And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them; and they died before the Lord, Lev. x. 2.* I was afraid that some of us might offer strange fire before the Lord, and so provoke him to make a breach upon us. I fell prostrate with my face towards the ground, grieving for my own sins, and for the sins of God's Israel; and earnestly begged that he would purge away our sins, for his name's sake; and come forth with minister's and people to the feast, and glorify himself, shewing mercy to us notwithstanding of our rebellion and ungratefulness to him: and praying that his presence might go with us, and that will make a glad some feast.—And I must say to the praise of the Lord, that he condescended to hear unworthy me; and by his word and Spirit so shined in upon my soul that I was filled with wonder at his love. The words which he brought to my mind, were *Exod. xxiv. 8, 11. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant.—And upon the nobles of the children of Israel*

he laid not his hand: also they saw God, and did eat and drink.—O how sweet were these words to my soul! O what joy was it to my soul to see that God had laid his avenging hand upon glorious Christ, and would not lay it upon us! I then went to the meeting-house, wondering at his love, and sat down at the first table.

Mr. Fisher, at that time, preached on Psalm xxiv. 7. *Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in.* After explaining the words, he observed the following doctrine, viz. “That as there is a solemn charge given “to sinners of mankind, in the dispensation of the “gospel, to open or lift up the doors of their hearts “to Christ, the King of glory, in a way of believing; “so it is secured, by promise, that he shall come in.” In discoursing the subject, he proposed to do the following things, 1. To speak of the solemn charge here given to sinners of mankind, to lift up, or open the everlasting doors of their hearts. 2. To speak of the King of glory, in whose favour access to the heart is demanded. 3. To speak of the promise of his in-coming to the heart of sinners. And then to apply the subject. — And I must say to the praise of the Lord, this was as joyful a day as ever I saw all my life-time: for a bright display of redeeming love did with power shine in upon my soul. This whole day I got leave to delight myself in his love; and I had little molestation from enemies without or within my own heart.— When Mr. Fisher came to speak of the King of glory’s opening the heart of sinners, I got leave to reflect on the work of the Spirit of God upon my own soul, in the day of my first believing. O what unspeakable joy did this fill my soul with! He said, among other things, “If your hearts have been opened to the King of “glory, in a way of believing, your affections of love, “desire, and esteem, will be strongly moving out to- “wards him; or, at least, you will know sometimes

“ what it is to be sick of love : that is, to have a soul-sickness because you cannot get him loved according to his worth.” And this was the grief of my heart, that I loved glorious Christ so little, when I saw so much of his love to my own soul. O this is joy above all the joys of this world, to have this conclusion surely sealed, *Christ is mine and I am his*. O wonderful love to a poor sinful wretch that has ten thousand times over grieved the good Spirit of God : and every sin deserved to be sealed up to damnation. O how did this inflame the love of my soul to him who is altogether lovely ! And I desired to be with the Lord, where no cloud would ever cover from his glorious face again ; and where I would not be afraid of a deceitful heart to dishonour God any more ; nor ever any more be afraid of Satan’s temptations.

Never doth a soul lie lower in the dust, and abhorre itself, than when the Lord makes the most singular manifestations of his grace and love to it. And I must say, to his praise, upon the last day of this feast, his marriage robes smelled of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby I was made exceeding glad. I came away from this solemnity rejoicing in the faithfulness of God, who hath accomplished his promises ; so that I was made to say, *Not one word of that which the Lord spake hath failed*. But when I came home again, and fell to my ordinary employment, the Lord hid his glorious face. I went to prayer, in order to plead that he would return again, and let me have communion, peace, joy, and comfort in the seasons of duty again. I got no comfort ; and a dark day of desertion, and some combats with Satan’s temptations followed. I was made to cry, *O that it were with me as in months past, when the candle of the Lord did shine upon my tabernacle*. The hiding of his countenance was my great burden. And methought he said too, *It is expedient for you that I go away*. I was much afraid to enter into the cloud : it continued, however,

about three months. And I had the roaring lion to grapp'e with, who loves well to fish in muddy waters.

Another thing that burdened me much was, that ordinances were tasteless to my soul. Before this time Sabbath-days were to me heaven upon earth. O the presence of God in ordinances. O the taste of that joy my soul hath been made to taste of in ordinances ! The fulness whereof is in heaven. The state of this mortality cannot bear the fulness of that joy. At one time I got such a glimpse of his glory, I could hold no more in this clay vessel : it so wrought upon the very body, by sympathy with the soul. O with what vigorous desires did my soul long for that day, when this body of mine would be cast into a new mould, that I might be ever with the Lord, where no cloud would ever cover from his glorious countenance ? O that I could mourn over these sins that provoked him to withhold the light of his countenance from my soul. And no wonder tho' Christ suffered me to seek long ere I found it again ; seeing I had given him so little room in my heart when he was present.

About this time I heard Mr. M'Cara preach on the Sabbath-days for several weeks : but still the Lord hid his face ; and I could not be duly burdened when the glory was departed from me. Then I thought, O that I were at home at our own minister again. Then I imagined I would have some communion and nearness with God ; for Mr. Cock's preachings had been exceeding refreshing to me before now.

On the first Sabbath after I came home, Mr. Cock preached on Psalm cxix. 10. *Let me not wander from thy commandments.* I looked for comfort ; but instead of that, I was filled with sorrow : for he spoke much of the wanderings and strayings of the saints. Then I was afraid that I would dishonour God as they had done : for the fire of sin is a burden that I win little above. The Lord knows that I am more afraid of sin, then of hell, or of death. The enemy strongly sug-

gested to me, that it was pride and gross hypocrisy in my heart, to think that I was a saint. But I studied to improve a covenant-relation with God, who had so far condescended to pardon a rebel, and be reconciled and pacified to me after all I had done. When I thought how I had dishonoured God, by unbelief, before this time, I had no will to do it again. But the enemy did pursued me; making me believe that I would one day or other fall by his hand.—When I was coming home, the adversary gave me a new onset, and told me, I might stay away from the ordinances till Mr. Cock had done with preaching on that text. To which I replied, This is not God's way; for he delights more in the dwellings of Jacob, than in all the gates of Sion. At which these words were borne in upon my mind, 2 Tim. iv. 3. *For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.* I took this to be a reproof from God for my sins: for I knew the doctrine was sound, although I could not endure to hear it. It pleased the Lord, however, after this, to rebuke the tempter for a time. And Mr. Cock, preached on John x. 14. *I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep; and am known of mine.* And I must say to the Lord's praise, he did with power shine upon his word and ordinances again, and filled my soul with joy and peace in believing. Sometimes when Mr. Cock read over this text, it was like a preaching to me; I saw so much of Christ in it, and the relation he stands in to us.

Now the year 1755 is ended: and I cannot but say to the praise of my Lord, altho' a year of great temptations from Satan; yet a year also of the most glorious manifestations of Christ that ever I enjoyed. And I may say to his praise, he made Sabbaths my delight, the holy of the Lord and honourable: and he caused me to ride upon the high places of the earth; and fed me with the heritage of Jacob.

PERIOD SEVENTH.

This period presents us with an account of her exercise during the year 1756; the temptations she met with from Satan, and how she was enabled to repel them: together with the signal manifestation of the love of God she met with, in attending on some communion solemnities, with the concern she had on her spirit for the nation in general, and particularly for the congregation she lived in; and the gracious return made to her requests.

IN the beginning of the year 1756, Mr. Cock preached on Isa. xxvi. 9. *When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.* The doctrine he insisted on was to this purpose, "When God's judgments are abroad in the earth, all ought to learn righteousness; but some only will learn righteousness." He spoke very much of the sin-procuring judgments; and of the likeness and similitude that took place between the sins and the judgments. Some times when I was hearing these sermons, my soul was made to tremble for fear of the Lord's righteous judgments; for, at this time, there were several signal evidences that the Lord's righteous judgments were abroad in the earth: great claps of thunder, fire, hail, stormy-winds, and earthquakes were in divers places, besides many spiritual judgments. All this made my soul within me to tremble for fear of his righteous judgments. Yet I may say to his praise, he kept the faith of his redeeming love in my view; and this kept me from fainting. Sometimes I was made to come to the Lord burdened with my own sins and the sins of the land; and made to cry, O my Father, the hope of Israel and Saviour thereof, in time of trouble.

Some time after this, it pleased the Lord to manifest

himself to me, even unworthy me, both in duties and ordinances; and especially the duties of meditation. O but the love of glorious Christ is a sweet field to meditate on. I have just reason to acknowledge to his praise, that he condescended so far to me, for some time, as to give me a blink of his glorious countenance every day, in one duty or another. O wonderful love, that ever he loved so unworthy a creature. O Sirs, the glorious beauty that I saw in him! he is the God-man; Immanuel, God with us. Yea, I say, his glorious beauty has ravished my heart, and filled my soul with vehement desires to be with the Lord: and this made me to cry, "O time, time; O cruel time, that hasteth
" not thy paces, that long eternity might approach,
" that I might win to the full communion with him." I saw such excellency in glorious Christ, that darkened all created glories. O that I could love my altogether lovely Lord. But, alas! this idol of self many a time pulls the crown off the head of my lovely Lord, and sets it upon the head of sinful self: but, O that he may wear the crown and possess the throne in my heart for ever and ever.

So violent, however, were the temptations of the strong enemy, that his fiery darts were as a sword within my bowels.—By this time my health was very much broken, and the weak body scarce able to subsist any longer, which threw me in a fever. For some days the enemy did sorely assault me, that for the most part of seven nights and days I slept little at all; sleep really became a terror to me: and my body was so very weak, that I thought death might be in the cup; and because I thought it might be death, I told very much of my mind both to our minister, and some other christians; but especially to our minister.

On the back of thus communicating my mind to Mr. Cock and others, the Lord brought in upon my mind with power, those words in Job v. 19. *He will deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no*

evil touch thee. From this I saw that the Lord would yet turn me back to the wilderness again; nevertheless he made me willing. But the enemy strongly assaulted me with that temptation, For all the profession I had made in religion, I would yet fall into sin, and dishonour God. Between this and that of pride of graces, to pull the crown off glorious Christ's head and to set it upon the head of self, sinful self, Ah! how did the enemy assault me! But it pleased the Lord to rebuke the tempter, and the fever both. And I have just reason to say, to the praise of the Lord, he was very kind to me; and gave me now and then a blink of his glorious countenance through the whole time of this fever.—O that I could praise him for his love! O wonderful love! it is not the manner of man, O Lord, to give love for rebellion. O love him; O my soul love him.

It was agreed that the sacrament of the Lord's supper was to be dispensed at Crawford's-dyke on the last Sabbath of May 1756.—Upon the Sabbath-day before the preparation, Mr. Cock preached on Luke xiii. 24. *Strive to enter in at the strait gate.* This was a day I thought the Spirit of the Lord bore witness with him, that he was sent express from Christ his master, with a commission to us. And it was a day in which I was made glad, and induced to rejoice: and I was big with expectations that the Lord's presence would be with us at the approaching solemnity. But the next Sabbath, which was the preparation, Mr. Cock preached on another text, and I was disappointed: I imagined he would be on the fore-mentioned text again; for he promised he would give some marks of those who had entered in at the strait gate: but the Lord hid his face, and my heart plagues prevailed.—Then began I to enquire after the cause of it; and I saw that I had not given God the glory of what countenance he had given to his servant. This grieved me much, that I had sinned the Lord away from his servant, and from my-

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self also.—When I was thus in my confusion the tempter was not idle; he would have me to believe that our minister had forsaken the Lord, and the Lord would not countenance him again.

The night before the fast-day, I was in our minister's house, and saw him in some confusion on account of some disorder in his family. I was uneasy, and said to him, Sir, I am grieved to see you so perplexed. He said to me, I cannot help it now. And he moreover said, I have much need of your sympathy. Ah! this was like fuel to fire the temptation; and unbelief was so strong with me, that when I went to prayer for him, I could neither get liberty for him, nor yet for the Lord's coming to the feast. And to increase my grief, these words haunted me, *They have forsaken me the fountain of living waters*. Now, had this been true, it would have put the sacrificing knife to the throat of the promise; for many a time I have gotten access to plead with the Lord for him: and the promise, with a majesty, lustre, and divine power borne in with the word; which no delusion can have, neither from Satan or any of his temptations. Sometimes the Lord did bear in his own word with such majestic power and sweetness, as that I was made to say, *It is the voice of my Beloved that knocketh*.—There is always something in Christ's voice that is not in Satan's, nor any of his temptations.

On Saturday, our sermons were very sweet to me; but especially Mr. Cock on the Sabbath-day. O how shall I put an observe on the Lord's loving-kindness this day! When Mr. Cock came out in the morning he seemed to have much of the Lord's presence with him: yea, I thought every word he spoke had a majesty and a divine power coming along with it. I must acknowledge that this was one of the most glorious days that ever I beheld: it was like an emblem of heaven; for the glory of the Lord filled the house.

Mr. Cock's action-sermon, at this time, was on Rev.

xix. 7. *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* This was a very remarkable and savoury discourse to my soul. Among many other things he said, "This is a remarkable day; a great day, on three accounts: 1. It is a festival-day; 2. It is a coronation-day; 3. It is a marriage-day: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him.* He also said, "There is not one within this house, but they are married to one of two husbands; ye are either married to the glorious and worthy Lamb, or ye are married to the law; and that husband will curse you to your face."—He called us all to match with the worthy Lamb; and said, "Whatever contemptible an eye ye may look on us with, O look not with a contemptible eye upon the worthy and glorious Lamb." Then he "obtestated and beseeched us, by all the joys of heaven, and by all the torments of hell, to match with the worthy and glorious Lamb; then it would be a day of gladness to the Lamb, and also a day of gladness to the bride, the Lamb's wife: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him.*" He had some remarks how the bride the Lamb's wife had made herself ready.—He told us, "That if any deserved a rich and wealthy bride, it was the Lamb; but instead of that, he got her a divour, and he left her one: for no sooner was she out of arrears to law and justice, but she was deep in arrears to the sovereign grace of God."—He also said, "She was a naked bride, a blind bride, and a deaf bride; yea, in some sense she was worse than the devils; for the devils never rejected so many offers of the Lamb."—And he likewise said, "Withal she is unwilling; for she is tied neck and heel to the covenant of works." O this was a day that the Lord surprized me with his loving-kindness. Mr. Cock moreover added, "Take it for a good token, the Lord's appearing here this day, that he will yet do great things amongst this poor handful in Crawford's-dyke." At hearing this, I was extreme-

ly glad ; for the burden of this congregation lay much upon my spirit : and sometimes I got the promise that the Lord would do good with the gospel in it. Many a request I have had for it, that it might become fruitful, and bring forth many sons and daughters to Christ; and was answered with that word, Psalm lxviii. 31. *Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands to God.*

This day I got leave to hear the action-sermon with both joy and sorrow ; sorrow for **my sins**, especially the sin of unbelief ; when I saw how I had pierced glorious Christ, I was disposed to cry out, O that I could weep over my sins, if it were possible, with tears of blood : yet I was filled with joy and wonder at his redeeming love. O Sirs, I got leave to behold love shining in a cup of red wine : O that I could praise him for his love.—But before I rose from the table of the Lord, I was sore afraid that I would dishonour God again : but when my spirit was overwhelmed within me, for fear of sin, I must say to his praise, O how sweetly did the Spirit of God shine upon those words, Mal. iii. 10. *Prove me now herewith, saith the Lord.* O how did that attribute, the faithfulness of God, shine forth in those words, *Prove me now ?* I thought it was, as if the Lord had said to me, in times of temptations, when thy foot had almost slidden, did I not uphold thee ? To which I replied, that is sure, thou didst uphold me, O Lord. And also, as if the Lord had said, *Prove me now* for times to come.—O that I could praise him for his love ! his love is unparalleled love : if we would have a parallel to his love, we must leave the earth and go away to heaven, and see the *Father loving him, as he hath loved us*, John xv. 9.

On the back of this communion, I cannot but say that the impressions of what I met with were sweet to me for sometime ; yea, I had a great pleasure in thinking upon, and also in telling to others, what God had done for my soul. Likewise those with whom I conferred about those things, told me, that this commu-

nion was to them as great a day of the Son of Man, as for a great while they had experienced; which was very desirable tidings to me.—O this duty of meditation was very profitable and sweet to me, in which I really found much of the Lord's presence with power: and when I was helped to keep at this duty, I found my spiritual enemies not so strong.—For two weeks I lived as it had been in the suburbs of heaven, when I thought on the Lord's loving-kindness to my soul. He did not satisfy the vehement desires of my soul, so as to give me heaven in its full possession; yet I must say, to his praise, he gave me a heaven some times upon the earth.

Sometime after this, the sacrament was to be dispensed in Glasgow, in Mr. Fisher's congregation. On Saturday I went to hear sermon in the Church-yard; and Mr. M'Cara was on these words, Isa. xl. 20. *He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.* He spoke well to my case.—Mr. Horn preached on Rom. x. 3. *For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.* He said, "I will give you two marks of trial, whereby ye may know if ye have submitted yourselves to the righteousness of God: If so, ye have seen the spirituality of the law to be exceeding broad, extending not only to the outward man, but to the thoughts and secrets of the heart; and ye have also seen the corruptions of your own hearts, which has rendered you vile and ugly."—Mr. Cock preached in the evening on 1 Kings viii. 38. *Know every one the plagues of his own heart.* I got leave to apply. This was a sweet time to me: I was banquetted in the house of love.

On the Sabbath morning I came to the first table. Mr. Fisher was on 1 Pet. ii. 7. *Unto you that believe he is precious.* He held out every thing in Christ to be precious to the believer. I got leave to hear with joy:

and when I came out to the tent, Mr. James Erskine was on these words, Exod. xxxiii. 18. *And he said, I beseech thee shew me thy glory.* He then spoke of the seasons that believer's saw the glory of God in: and told us, that the Lord led some believers to the foot of mount Sinai, and there discovered to them the glory of his grace. O how sweet was this sermon to me! it was sweet in hearing, and sweet in meditation; for I got leave to make application to myself.

On Monday, the last day of the solemnity, I heard Mr. M'Cara on 2 Cor. viii. 5. *But first gave their own-selves to the Lord, and to us by the will of God.* He then spoke much of what this giving imported: and said, among other things, it imported, "That they saw Christ to be a suitable match for them: and what did they give him? *Their own-selves*; their souls and their bodies: yea, in a word, they gave him *all* that they had." This day I made a new resignation of myself away to the Lord. But after I came home again, I found the frame of my spirit growing very carnal: this afflicted me mightily. Through the week I was in a very ill case; being deserted, I could do nothing but sin. When I went to duty, I was so seized with sleep, that I could not open my mouth.—In this melancholy case I could do nothing but sigh and groan; and I longed for the Sabbath again, that I might win to the ordinances. Oh! what a burden did all duties become to me? Prayer became a burden; writing became a burden, although I have found much of God in them. This verified that word of our Lord to me, *Without me ye can do nothing.*

On Sabbath morning I was in a very dead and confused frame of spirit: and, O but the body of sin and death grew strong. My idols had too much room in my heart, which was like to be my death: yet none of these sins could hinder the Lord to manifest more and more of his love to me: when I came to the ordinances, I must say to his praise, he did not disappoint me. O

the sweet intercourse I got of his love! Mr. Cock being on the foresaid text, Rev. xix. 7. he gave some marks of these who were truly married to the Lamb: and I got leave to apply them. And I may say, to the praise of the Lord, many a glorious day did I enjoy under his ministry. I found a great deal of the Spirit and power of God in his sermons; and there was scarce any secret in my heart but he was directed to speak to it.—O that I could bless the Lord that ever he brought me under his ministrations.

Whilest the Lord continued to shine upon me with the light of his countenance, my mountain then stood strong; but no sooner did he hide his face than trouble presently ensued. After this display of his goodness, I met with a sore trial; for a storm and tempest of spiritual pride, and that abominable thing, self; what name shall I give it? it is a great deceiver; it is a God-dishonouring and a soul-destroying thing. Then I was afraid lest all the duties I had performed should receive no other stamp, but self-seeking. I saw so much of self in speaking, so much of self in writing, that I was afraid if ever the world saw them, they would dishonour God, there was so much of self in them. O that abominable thing, self. O self, that woful thing self; it will not be satisfied unless it ride side for side, so to speak, with glorious Christ: yea, and it pulls the crown off Christ's head. O the pride of my heart, it would de-throne glorious Christ out of my heart.—This was very distressing to me: but then these words were borne in on my mind, Psal. cxxxvii. 9. *Happy shall he be that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.* This was a little comfortable to me.

On the back of this, I met with a fore trial from my mother, as many a one I have met with. Then I made application to him who is the hearer of prayer; and was answered, *In the world ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace.* At this my corruptions flew up against the will of God; and the very thoughts

of the cross terrified me. Many a time before this, I thought I would be content to have Christ, with cross or crown: but now the cross of Christ afrighted me; for I was terrified, that when a day of trial came, all my resolutions would blow up. I was apprehensive I would be like the young man in the gospel who came to Christ, as if he would have done any thing for eternal life; and yet when he was put to it, he went away sorrowful: for I felt it was impossible for me to be denied to myself; O that abominable thing, self, which pulls the crown off Christ's head.—O that he would deliver me from that woful distemper of self-seeking. I truly think it is one of the most difficult parts in religion, to get self cast out, and God's glory put in the room of it. Ah! the enmity I found in my mind against God. —One night I fell a wondering if there were a name in Christ to answer such a condition as mine is, who am so proud, so rebellious, so selfish a creature. Whereupon I was answered with these words, *Thou hast received gifts for men, for such as did rebel.*—O what sweetness I found in these words! O that I could praise him for his love!

About this time the Lord's judgments were abroad in the earth: a bloody sword was already drawn; and I was afraid that as the shedding of the saints blood had been Scotland's sin, that the shedding of blood may be Scotland's judgment. When I thought upon Scotland's sin, I was afraid our sins would provoke the Lord to depart from us, which made me to cry to the Lord that he would graciously condescend to grant me these three petitions.

1. That he would never take away the glorious gospel from poor Scotland; for, if he take away his ordinances, he will not stay behind them. And here I must say, to the praise of the Lord, he has been to me the hearer of prayer; and he has given me his word for the ground of my hope, Isa. xlix. 16. *Behold I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are*

continually before me : and my covenant ſhall ſtand faſt,
Pſalm lxxxix. 28.

2. My ſecond petition was, That whatſoever furnace of affliction it pleaſed the Lord to caſt me into, that he would grant me his preſence in the furnace ; for it is the preſence of the Lord that makes a furnace ſweet. And I think the glorious hearer of prayer ſaid unto me, *He ſhall deliver thee in ſix troubles ; yea, in ſeven there ſhall no evil touch thee,* Job v. 19.

3. My third petition was, That the Lord would give me my bread in a ſolitary way, if it be for his glory, I ſee the world to be ſuch an enemy to religion. Many a time it has interrupted my ſweet communion with my glorious huſband Chriſt. But in this matter I deſire to put a blank in Chriſt's hand. Give me, O Lord, what thou wilt : but keep me from a worldly ſpirit ; and keep me about thy hand, O Lord.

About this time, I muſt ſay, and to the glory of God be in ſpoken, this was a time that the Lord gave me many promiſes, both for the church, and for particular perſons ; and he hath accompliſhed ſome of them. O for more faith upon God, for there is not one diſcovery of the faithfulneſs of God, but it hath a voice, and cryeth out, O believe him who is able to give an accompliſhment unto his word. O that I knew how to commend the Lord's way to all, both to ſtrangers and friends ; and it becomes me well ſo to do. Yet at this time it was a trial to me to know how to reconcile providences and the promiſes together. Although about this time I had heard many ſweet and comfortable ſermons ; many glorious days did I enjoy under Mr. Cock's miniſtry : yet the congregation lay ſtill heavy on my ſpirit. It grieved me that ſo very few matched with the worthy and glorious Lamb. The Lord only knows what grief it hath been to me, when I was banquetted in the houſe of love, that ſo few would come and ſee, come and taſte of his love. This made me many a time to cry to the Lord for a

day of his power to the congregation; so that many souls might be convinced and converted. And I think the glorious hearer of prayer has given me his promise, for a ground of faith, that he will grant me my petitions. See Psalm lxxviii. 31. Isa. xli. 14, 15.

P E R I O D E I G H T H.

In this period we are presented with a melancholy situation she was plunged into, after her former high attainments. She is deserted of God, the duties of religion become a burden to her, and Satan is let loose upon her with great fury: together with the relief she found, and the gracious interviews she met with from the Lord, in attending upon him in duties and ordinances.

IT is with pleasure I have it to remark, and I acknowledge it to the glory and praise of the most high God, that for two years before this time, I durst not in the least doubt of my interest in glorious Christ: I enjoyed more near and sweet communion with God than ever I had done before, both in prayer, in meditation, and hearing the word.—Yet there is one thing I have to observe, that the nearer access I got to my dear Lord, the stronger were my assaults on the back of it.

I was informed that the sacrament was to be dispensed at Glasgow, in the month of June, 1757. I resolved to attend the solemnity: and when I came to the place, O how sweet and refreshful were these sermons to me! till the Sabbath evening I heard Mr. M'Cara preach on Mark x. concerning the young man in the gospel,—how great a length one may come in religion, and yet lack the *one thing*, as that man did. This occasioned disquietude in me, lest I should prove the same. I fell under apprehensions that all my resoluti-

ens would blow up, when a day of trial cometh, and be like that young man who came to Christ, as if he would have done any thing for eternal life; and yet when he was put to it, *he went away sorrowful*; whenever Christ touched him in his predominant.

Mr. M'Cara preached on Monday, being the last day of the feast: and I may say it was the great day of it to me. He was on 2 John 8. *Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought*. He spoke of the times that believers gained, and how they came to lose these things they had wrought. Mr. Horn closed the work on these words, *Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong*. He exhorted us to stand fast in the spiritual warfare, and to quit ourselves like men. And I am sure he spoke as directly to my case, as if he had known it: but, being convinced of the treachery of my own heart, I durst put no trust in it; and I wanted faith to trust Christ with the keeping of it. Alas! how was I then burdened with fear of dishonouring God, and wounding religion! I was afraid I would fall some day by the hand of the enemy: this embittered all my comforts.

I am now in a great strait how to record what grief, trouble, and anguish of spirit I was brought under after this communion; a scene of perplexing fears ensued, lest all I had attained to would turn out to naught; and all my resolutions prove like the morning cloud, and the early dew, that soon passeth away.

One day I was looking on a sermon, on these words, *Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation*. The author spoke to many cases that might be perplexing, and to the sins of the tempted: He observed, "That the great sin of the tempted lay in misbelief of the promises, and the power of God to keep them in the hour of temptation." When I saw this, I was filled with wonder and admiration, at the goodness of God to so unworthy, ungrateful, and rebellious a creature as I was. I thought it was a wonder the Lord did not let

me fall into punishment for the sin of unbelief. I went into a room, and fell down on my face, resolved to sacrifice to God the sacrifice of thanksgiving for this instance of faithfulness, and the many great deliverances he hath given to me, out of the hand of the enemy. O how shall I record the long-suffering patience of the Lord, who did not manifest himself to me in wrath for so doing. I got leave to act faith, and to pour out my soul into his bosom: but I got not out of the place till a messenger of Satan was sent to buffet me, and I had a thorne in the flesh to grapple with. The adversary gave me a terrible onset; and told me, I only loved God for his deliverance, not for his holiness; and that this was but a mark of hypocrites, who love God only for his benefits, not for his holiness.—O difficult work; it is not easy to know what it is to love God for his holiness. When I looked into the scripture, I saw that it was the practice of the saints to love the Lord, because he did so and so: but what it was to love God for his holiness, is no small difficulty for me to know.

After this I fell under an extraordinary deadness, so that I could apply myself to nothing; duties were a very burden to me, and that because I found not the Lord in them. All the glorious days I had enjoyed were no comfort to me. These words often haunted my mind, Luke xxii. 32. *But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:* with John xvi. 22. *And ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice.* But I was greatly afraid that the cloud would remain long upon my soul.

The time of our sacrament being to be dispensed, drew near; the thought of which bred many doubts in my mind what to do, knowing that I was not in a communion frame and disposition. Mr. M'Cara preached the fast-day, on Heb. x. 22. *Let us draw near, with a true heart, in full assurance of faith.* He spoke to many difficulties that were in the way of drawing near

to God : but my greatest difficulty he spoke not to.— In the time of the Saturday's sermons I was like a dead dog, or an unclean beast. Oh ! the confusion I was in ! and when I went to duty, my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.

On the Sabbath morning, Mr. Cock preached on Zech. xiii. 7. *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts ; smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered : and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones.* He had a great sermon, and very comfortable ; but my deadness was so exceeding great, that I could not take comfort. And when he came to fence the tables, I thought he cut me off ; for he cut off all from that holy table, that had inbred murdering thoughts. Then I presently concluded I was guilty : for, although I never had thoughts of murdering any body, how often have I been haunted with thoughts of self-murder ! From day to day have they haunted me like a ghost, although I abhorred them, and was sore afraid lest I should be swallowed up with the violence of this temptation. But blessed be the Lord who always made a way of escape. Some may think this a very strange temptation, a sin against the very light of nature, and the very letter of the law of God, *Thou shalt not kill.* Ah ! the confusion I was in : and I almost concluded that I would not communicate this day ; yet there was a secret word borne in on me, *Is this thy kindness for thy friend ?* When Mr. Fisher invited us to come to the last table, he said, “ Altho’ you cannot say with the woman, that you love much, because much is forgiven you ; yet if ye can see and say that ye have much to be forgiven, we bid you come to the Lord’s table.” On hearing this, I presently thought he invited me ; for I have much to be forgiven : and then I arose and went to the table ; but my Lord was absent.

When the solemn work of the day was over, I retired to a secret place to pray, thinking that perhaps I

might meet with the Lord : but there was nothing but deadness ; and I was greatly afraid that the cloud would be of a long continuance. Oh ! I could not think of the hidings of the Lord's gracious face. I received a strong conviction for my sin and folly this day ; especially how ungrateful I proved to so kind a Lord : and also for grieving the heart of our minister ; for I told him he had cut me off in fencing the tables. When I did so, he indeed told me, it was a temptation of Satan ; and if I neglected the duty of communicating, I might come to smart for it afterwards.—I resolved, that the first occasion of that nature that offered, I should not do as I had done this day.

In this melancholly situation, O what burden did all religious duties become to me ! verily I thought it was a weariness to serve the Lord, when I could not find him in the duty.—And amidst all my down-castings, I had the roaring lion to grapple with, who loves well to fish in muddy waters. The enemy would often persuade me, that there was no reality in religion.—However, these considerations enabled me not to credit it. 1. If there were no reality in religion, how comes it to pass that graceless sinners, when they come to die, when people are for ordinary most serious, do so frequently desire to be religious ? 2. If there be no reality in religion, how comes it to pass, that the religious are so often encouraged by God, in the practice and profession of religion ; and meet with so many mercies from the God they serve ; and many of these mercies come to them as the answer of their prayers ? 3. If there be no reality in religion, how comes it to pass, that the judgments threatened against the wicked, in God's word, have so frequently such an exact accomplishment ?—But we have need to take heed of fighting against Satan with human reason ; for that leviathan laughs at the shaking of this spear, his skin is too thick, and his scales too close to be pierced by it.

Did Satan leave me so ? No, no : He came so fiercely on me, and to such a degree, that I was tempted

again to self-murder. Then I cryed to the Lord, and said, *The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee.*

Whatever has been in my lot of judgments or mercies, I see matter for a song. 1. The judgment of *temptations*; they are not like the gall of asps, bitter and deadly: but like good rubarb and aloes, by which iniquity shall be purged. 2. The judgment of *corruption* humbleth, and layeth us low; so that we may become the habitation, where the Lord will dwell. And is not this matter of a song? and it sends us many errands to the throne of grace. 3. In the judgment of *desertion* we want matter of a song; for this among other reasons, because the Lord thereby teacheth us that we cannot stand on our own feet; we are like a broken glass that cannot stand without a support. — When I enjoyed the light of God's countenance, I thought never to be moved; but now he hath hidden his face, and I am troubled: and yet it is matter of a song; and that because this long desertion is but making way for a new manifestation, where we shall get a *new song put in our mouth*, Psalm 40th, where David was shewing how he was *in the depths, where there was no standing*; but what follows? *He set my feet upon a rock, and put a new song in my mouth, even praises to our God.*

This week our minister had a fast-day; and he preached on Psalm cxliv. 5. *Bow thy heavens, O Lord, and come down; touch the mountains, and they shall smoke.* He observed, that there were mountains of Bether between the Lord and his people: but if he would touch them, they would smoke or flee away. This was very refreshing to me; for I was at this time greatly deserted. — The Sabbath-day following, the sacrament was to be dispensed in Mr. M'Cara's congregation, where I resolved to attend. When I came to the place, O how sweet and refreshing were the sermons on Saturday to me? Mr. Moir discoursed upon Gal. iii. 1. *Before*

whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you. The whole of it was sweet to me; but when he came to the application, he gave us some marks of trial; and in the mean time my heart could have sealed the truth of the evidences he condescended upon: he spoke of the very language of my heart; and I wanted not some measure of joy in hearing this sermon. I thought he spoke directly to my case; and I got a new confirmation of my adoption.

Mr. Cock was on Phil. iv. 19. *But my God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus.* O but this was a sweet sermon to me; for I saw in glorious Christ that which could supply all my wants. Am I ignorant? he is a Prophet: am I guilty? he is a Priest: have I enemies? he is a King. What though the devil tempt me to misbelief, I can answer him with the promises: what though I meet with afflictions; a crown of glory will make up for all. Yea, all things are in glorious Christ that I want.—This was a very comfortable night to me; and these words haunted my mind, *Sanctify yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders amongst you.*

Mr. M'Cara had his action-sermon in Deut. xxx. 19. *I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life that both thee and thy seed may live.*—He called all things in heaven, and all things in the earth to witness against us, if we would not accept of Christ. I thought there was a remarkable power came along with the words, making me willing to consent to this blessed bargain. In which place I took to witness the heavens and the earth, that it was a sealed bargain betwixt Christ and me; for I was made willing with the offer.—After that I had consented to this blessed bargain deliberately, I went to get it sealed at the table of the Lord. My petitions at the table were these, “That the Lord would continue his gospel in Scotland for ever; and that he would continue the

gospel in that congregation; for, at this time, there were great surmises of Mr. M'Cara's leaving them, which was great sorrow to me then, and still more so when it actually took place, as it really did a short time after this." My third petition was, "That the Lord would open the hearts of sinners in that congregation to consent to glorious Christ, so freely offered to them in the gospel." There were also some petitions put up for myself; particularly, That he would keep me from all sin.—"I here this day promise, as in thy sight, O Lord, to stand to thy interest though persecution should arise, and to lay down my life, if thou callest for it. Come, Lord, tie both me and my resolutions fast to thyself, that I slide not back in trying times."—O but this was a comfortable day to me, wherein my interest in Christ was as visible to me as if it had been written in golden letters before mine eyes. It is impossible for the tongue of men and angels to declare the joy and comfort I experienced, when I thus gave myself to the Lord: and, in testimony whereof, I take myself to witness, and all in heaven and earth, that I am not my own, but the Lord's. Written and subscribed at Bruntshields, the fourth Sabbath of July, 1757.

MARION LAIRD.

As to my request about Mr. M'Cara's leaving the place, I thought I was answered thus, *What ye know not now, ye shall know hereafter*. And there came such a sweet power along with the words, which made me to say, *Lord, it is enough*.—And as for my request to be kept from apostacy, I was answered, *My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in thy weakness*.

On the back of this solemnity I was much affected with the sense of judgments, both present, and what I feared was coming. At this time we were threatened with both sword and famine. When I thought on his righteous judgments, my heart trembled within me. O how often did I supplicate the throne of grace, that

the Lord would give strength according to the day of trial ; for I was afraid that trying days were a-coming. Yet there are two things I was apprehensive might be our judgment. I could not consent to the first, namely the Lord's leaving the land, and taking the precious gospel from us, and the gospel minister's, making us again a habitation of idolatry.—Another thing I could not consent to, the want of the Lord's presence in the furnace ; for his presence will make even the furnace sweet : I would willingly yield to any trial, whatever he would see fit to tryst us with, if so be it were to purge away our sins, and make us more holy : but to submit to the taking away the gospel from Scotland, that I would never do ; no, my heart would never comply with that. I find that in the gospel which answers all cases. Then I was disposed to say, " O Lord, for thy glorious name's sake, remember this sinful church and nation ; and when thou comest with thy sore judgments, let them be for purging and purifying both ministers and people, that they may come out of the furnace all glorious, that other nations may see thou lovest to dwell in this covenanted Scotland.—Now, Lord, for Christ's sake, when thou in wrath visitest this land, and altho' I should fall in the common calamity, yet let my soul be united to thee in peace. O do not suffer me to flinch from the least article of thy truth. Let not my self-ends get more room in my heart than thy glory. But, O Lord, if it were for thy glory to hide me in the grave, before thou comest out of thy place, to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquities ; yet, *Not my will be done, but thy holy will.*—Now, O God, seeing there is such a vehement desire in my heart to be with Christ, O when wilt thou bring me to the full enjoyment of his glorious presence within the vail, where no intervening cloud would ever cover me from his blessed face again ; and where I may be free from sinning, free from a wicked heart, and free from a tempting devil?"

PERIOD NINTH.

This period gives us an account of her being visited with bodily trouble; her resignation to the will of God therein, though impressed with the views of its being lengthened out: together with the reasons, why she so often desired to be disembodied, and get home to her Father's house; and the agreeable entertainment she met from the Lord both in public and private.

EVER since I can rightly remember, it hath been my kind Lord's way with me, often-times to hedge up my way with thorns of affliction; by this he has made me to escape some of the pollutions of the world: yet he has punished me less than my iniquities deserve. However, under these afflictions, the Lord hath been very kind to my soul, in manifesting his glory to me; whereby I have seen more of the vanity of the world than ever I saw by affliction: he has given me sometimes such a view of his glory, as darkened the glory of all created objects; and by which I got above the clouds of darkness and unbelief now and then: and glad would I have been never to have come down to the world again.

About the middle of August 1757, it pleased the Lord to visit me with afflictions on my body.—O what am I, that he should be so condescending to me, as to warn me of afflictions before they came upon me!—He bore in upon my mind these words, Amos iv. 12. *Because I will do thus unto thee; prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.* And Exod. xix. 5. *Be ye ready against the third day.*—The Lord, by his grace, enabled me to put the whole of this work back into his own hand; that he would sanctify and prepare me for what he had a mind to do with me. O what divine majesty I saw

in reading this 19th chapter of Exodus ! O what of his love shined to me in other parts of the inspired and blessed word ! A sweeter time than this I never enjoyed : for I saw that in the holy scriptures which I never saw before. O Sirs, but a believing view of the soul's meeting with its Redeemer, and receiving a crown of glory from him at last, is an excellent support under the heaviest affliction. Faith represents Christ as standing by the furnace as a refiner, where his gold is melting, carefully overseeing the trials of his people, that they may work for their good, and ready to bring them out thereof when they are sufficiently purified from their dross.

At this time, however, I was greatly in the dark about the language of the rod. I often begged of God, that *he would shew me wherefore he contended with me*; and if there be any secret sin I know not, he would shew it unto me. — It is exceedingly distressing to be under a silent rod. The Christians of old have taken much pains to know the voice of the rods that they met with ; as is clear from 2 Sam. xxi. 1. and Job vii. 20. Yet it is not every man, nor every woman, that can take up what the rod speaks ; it is only the person who is endowed with much heavenly wisdom from God.

One day when I was meditating on the voice and language of the rod, it came into my mind, that this rod may be for the trial and exercise of my faith : for I remember, when my kind Lord was pleased to bring me into the chambers of his presence, and made me give myself away to him ; then I thought, thro' the strength of the Lord's grace, I would be content with cross and loss, with any trial he pleased.—But this I greatly desired, that he would keep my interest in himself clear to me, and also keep me about his own hand.

“ O Lord, if thou givest me riches in this world, give
 “ me a heart to dispose of them for thy glory ; and if
 “ poverty be for thy glory, O make me content with

"it, or any thing thou pleatest."—I have heard of one who said, He is an unworthy wretch that cannot be content with God in Christ, with the want of all other things. But, ah! how ungrateful have I been to him! I have been a backslider in heart; yet, O what hath he done for my soul! and how many signal tokens of his love hath he bestowed on unworthy me, which many of his own dear children did not experience, at least, in such a measure? Job v. 15. *Happy is the man whom God correcteth.* I dare say, that afflictions have been no small mercy to me: the Lord has often hedged in my way, from sin, with the rod; yet notwithstanding the Lord's goodness to me, when he laid his afflicting hand on me, I had a new conflict to fight with Satan, and my own predominants. I could not get my will brought to submit to God's will. My great conflict was, these twelve years bygone, in my afflictions, to get my heart brought the length to be chearfully content and submissive to God's will, when he turned me back again into the wilderness.

Here I will give some account of the reasons whereupon my desires to die were founded.

1. I was as one impatient till I be above, at *uninterrupted fellowship and communion with glorious Christ.* I will never be at rest, enjoy what I will, until I get Christ; until I obtain these endearing and immediate embracements of that noble Plant of Renown, the flower of the stock of Jesse, who is the light of the higher house.—It hath pleased the Lord to give poor unworthy me such lively discoveries of the love of God in Christ, that I longed to be altogether with him, where there would be no more parting again.

2. I desire to be *avenged on my enemies, indwelling sin.* O that the Lord may enable me to carry the blood of Christ continually along with me, in the hand of faith, especially in the day of battle; for the enemy flies at the sight of it; *And they overcame by the blood of the Lamb,* Rev. xii. 11.—O how sweet has these

words been to me, *Stronger is he that is in you, than he that is in the world: These enemies whom ye see to-day, ye shall see no more!* I longed much for the victory over Satan, and a deceitful heart.

3. I desired to die, because I was so *useless for honouring God in the world*, where he is so much dishonoured by all ranks and denominations.

4. I desired to die, because I was afraid of *falling in time of trial*. I was very much assaulted this way: but my great relief was that which has been my life, viz. the promise, 1 Cor. x. 13. *There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man: but God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.* It is not, what I have, that makes me promise, or expect through-bearing; but what is in Christ, and the promise.

At this time, however, I was very timorous to meet with death: I thought many are the trials the Lord hath brought me through; but death is a trial I have no experience of.—O that I could praise the Lord for his astonishing love and condescendency to me at this time, although a night of sore affliction on my body. O how sweetly did the Lord shine on these words to me, *Take this rod in thine hand, therewith thou shalt do signs*; namely, the rod of the promise in the hand of faith; with Psalm xviii. 28. *For thou wilt light my candle; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness!* O the astonishing sovereignty of the grace of God! By the Spirit of God shining on these words, I thought that death was no more to me but to throw myself into the arms of glorious Christ. I was indeed once as much afraid of death as any, when I stood trembling under the terrors of God's law: but, in the mercy of God, and by the power of his grace, I was made composedly, and with joy, to look death in the face. I now dare to look it in the face, in its most ghastly shapes, and hope to have the victory through Christ.

I really longed for it. O for the grace of patience to wait for his coming.

It pleased the Lord to recover me a little out of this affliction: but these words very much haunted my mind, Mal. iii. 1. *The Lord whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in. I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also,* John xiv. 3. *Rest in the Lord, and patiently wait for him; do not fret.* I truly thought this was the voice of God to me: for, although I dare not repine at his afflicting hand; I longed exceedingly to be with the Lord. I desire to believe, that there is not a grain weight of affliction in my cup which infinite wisdom doth not think fit should be there. And I firmly believe, and desire to rest upon this, that infinite wisdom and infinite love, was at the mixing of the cup: and his tender heart will carve no more out to me than what he enables me to bear. O it is comfortable that Christ hath gone to heaven by the way of the cross; that his blessed feet hath trodden that way; and that his precious lips hath drunk of that cup. That has been a sweet word to me many a time, *In all your afflictions, I am afflicted.* Well may I say, *Behold what manner of love is this,* to such an unworthy creature.

On October 23d, 1757, Mr. Cock preached on Zech. xiii. 7. *Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd; against the Man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts.*—This day he was on the application; and he exhorted believers to devote themselves away to the Lord, and all that they had to him, who had exposed his breast as a living shield to the sword of justice for them: and he also exhorted us to prepare for sufferings. He said, “Some of you may live to see suffering days for the truths of Christ.” At hearing of this, I was afraid that I would flinch from the truth when a trying time would come. Then these scriptures were made sweet and comfortable to me: *Be strong in the Lord, and in*

the power of his might: and he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light. Said I not unto thee, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God.—This was a sweet night to me: after I came from the ordinances, I went to a secret place, where I again made a new resignation of myself to the Lord's service, to do and suffer whatever he pleased, and should call me to, on condition he give me strength to do it. I deny all strength of mine own to do any thing that is good. Daily experience hath taught me the truth of this: "Therefore, O Lord, I again and again give up myself to thee, in a sacrifice to thee this night; and, in testimony hereof, I have thought it, I have spoken it in prayer, and now I have written it."

The 30th of November, 1757, I set apart for fasting and prayer. At this time I was affected with the sense of judgments, both present, and what I feared was a-coming. It was reported, that the French were coming on us.—At this time we had the Highland-watch lying in our place, whereby the town was greatly defiled, by their abominations, and the holy name of God dreadfully blasphemed: and many were the indignities that was done to the Lord Jesus Christ.—At this time there were few making conscience of putting honour upon the Lord by witnessing for his cause and testimony. We are all obliged, by the oath of God, to own it and cleave to it, although many at this day are ashamed to own these vows. But, alas! who can think upon our sad deplorable condition, and not have their eyes affecting their hearts, and wishing that their head were waters, and their eyes fountains of tears, to weep day and night, if it were possible, with tears of blood, for our great and grievous defections, backslidings, and apostacies from God, and from a pure covenanted-work of reformation? No nation in the world hath so far changed their glory, for their shame.—For these, and many other abominations, I desire to be humbled this day before the Lord.

PERIOD TENTH.

This period presents us with the commencement of the sore trouble she was seized with, which lasted several years, and at last issued in her dissolution: together with the presages she had of its approach, and the certain grounds that it was to be a lengthened-out rod; with her exercise under it, for the first nine years thereof.

IT pleased the Lord, in the month of December 1757, to bind me with the cords of affliction: my body was sore pained with stitches, as if so many darts had been stuck in it, and left there; and all the means used for my relief, rather increased than alleviated my pain. All physicians were of no avail to me. My will was very submissive to the will of God for some time, till I met with several disappointments; then I thought I was like the children of Israel, who were brought unto the borders of Canaan, and for their sin were turned back into the wilderness again. Then I went to the Lord by prayer, to ask his mind concerning the rod, or if it was present death. The glorious hearer of prayer answered me with these words, *It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath kept in his own hand. Ye have need of patience, that after ye have done the will of God, ye may receive the promises, Heb. x. 36. The vision is for an appointed time, Hab. ii. 3.* From these words I saw my trouble was to be lengthened out: then unbelief took occasion from these words, *A thousand years are with the Lord as one day.* O how hard a matter did I find it to learn to be content? it was to me like the cutting off a right hand, or the plucking out a right eye: It was so cross to my nature, that I think I might fitly compare my heart to a pot, when the fire is set to it, which makes

the scum to appear that was not seen before: when the fire of affliction was kindled, it made much of the scum of discontentment to appear; the scum of self, and the scum of pride.—O how did my proud heart rise again, in *despising the chastening of the Lord?* But glory to him, *he dealt not with me as I sinned, nor did requite my ill.* When my trouble was most severe, he gave me many a broad sight of the promised land, and some foretastes of the fruit that groweth upon the tree of life. At some other times, he withheld the immediate shining upon his word, on which he hath caused me to hope; then I found my soul shrink at coming out of the body: but judging him faithful, in keeping that which is committed unto him, I resolved to cast myself over upon him in death and in life. At some other times, it pleased the Lord to draw aside the vail, and to discover the glory of God in the face of Jesus, which did so inflame my soul with desires to be altogether with the Lord, that truly I thought hell would be nothing to have passed through, at the nearest, to have these eternal embracements of my Lord within the vail.—O how loth was I to come down again from the mount of communion and fellowship with God!

When it pleased the Lord to give me a little mitigation of my trouble, he veiled his glory again: and then I must enter the lists with my spiritual enemies. O the discontentment of my heart, supported by pride and self. I thought my heart was a very den of devils. That word sometimes ran in my mind, *Let it suffice you that the house of David wax stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul weaker and weaker.* O how could I believe, that grace, like the house of David, was growing stronger; and sin, like the house of Saul, growing weaker, while I had a heart so full of discontentment, opposing the holy will of God? I often consulted with sense and reason: then I concluded that there is no more appearance of an out-gate from my trouble, than the first day of it. I was then in very

great danger of fainting under the chastening of the Lord.

One day my heart was raging discontentedly against God, and I said, *I do well to be angry*: but immediately that word came, *I will sharply reprove thee*; and with it such a sense of God's wrath was poured into my soul, as made me think, that thousands of years of trouble on the body, could have no preportion to that sense of wrath I felt upon my soul. *Who knoweth the power of thy wrath?* I never experienced the like before, nor read of, except in a letter of Mr. Rutherford's, for the same sin of discontentment. He says, "I bred a plea with Christ, for casting me over the dyke of the vineyard:" he adds, "my throat was scalded with the smoke of hell; and I would have bought peace again with Christ, with a thousand years suffering in hell."—O that the children of God would be aware of splitting on this rock! O that I could love and adore the sovereignty of God, in shortning that shock of his wrath, and in giving me a new intimation of pardon in these words, Isa. xxvii. 4. *Fury is not in me; he hath poured upon him the fury of his anger, in the strength of battle*: with Ezek. xvi. 63. *I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord of Hosts*. Here I got leave to see by faith, and in the glass of the word of God, the love of God, and the wisdom of God, in laying help upon one that is mighty, to bear that load of wrath, that would have pressed us to the lowest hell. I also got leave to behold the Son of God substituting himself in the law-room of elect sinners, and God pouring out upon him the fury of his anger, in the strength of battle, till justice was satisfied in the dear Son of his love; and, in virtue thereof, God smelling a sweet savour in this blessed sacrifice, these glad news has issued forth from his excellent glory, *I am pacified towards thee, for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God*. Now, I thought I saw these words truly verified, *The back*

slider in heart shall be filled with his own ways: thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee, Jer. ii. 19. I likewise saw sin in a brighter light than ever I did before.—Many think it a difficult work to die; but truly I thought it more difficult to live, because of the deceitfulness of my own heart. The Lord enabled me to triumph both over the fear of death, and love of life; but not above the fear of sin: not that I feared sin, from a fear of hell, nor yet for fear of fatherly chastisement; but because it is that abominable thing which offends a holy God. Sin made me long much for conformity to God.

One day upon the back of this, when I was on meditation, I found a strong desire in my mind to be back at the pleasures of the world. I tell a considering from whence the desire arose, it being so contrary to my ordinary desires: although I never had any light from the Lord's word, that he would turn me back again into the world, it was a part of my battle to get my will submissive to the will of God, whatever way seemeth him good: but my greatest desire was to be *with Christ, which is far better*. While I was considering the matter, it pleased the Lord to bear in these words upon my mind, Matth. iv. 8. *The devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them*. In these words the Lord discovered to me the subtilty of Satan, in alluring my affections, by the glory of the world. It brought into my mind also a saying of Mr. Welwood's, "This world hath bewitched all the worldlings out of their wits; and some of the saints of God, in a great measure."

By this time I was brought very low, and much deprived of converse with those who had formerly been refreshful to me, through the Lord's blessing. Three stranger ministers came to visit me; the first of them asked me, What I thought of Christ? I told him that I could think but very little about him, considering

his worth and matchless excellency. He desired me to commit all that concerned me unto him; *The Father hath committed all things into his hand.*—The second spoke on Mark ix. 7. *A bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud.* He said, every affliction was a cloud, and every cloud had a voice: and he moreover added, *Hear ye the voice of the rod, and him that hath appointed it.*—The third spoke on Luke vi. 48. concerning the man who built his house upon a rock; when the floods arose, and the storms beat vehemently upon it, it could not be shaken, because it was built upon a rock. He also said, that death discovered the reality of religion in some, and hypocrisy in others.—I could speak to none of them, through weakness, but the first. By this the Lord taught me more and more the emptiness of all things, beside himself; and weaned me away from all created comforts: for, at this time, if one had come suddenly to my bedside it would have taken my breath away for a little time; and when I essayed to speak to them, my pain occasioned fainting. I was hereby convinced how little I had improved my tongue for God, and the concerns of his glory, when I was in health. Man's tongue is his glory; and therewith he ought to glorify God. In this low condition, I saw much of the low condescendency of God: he was often pleased, by his word and Spirit, to converse with my soul, as a man doth with his friend, when I could be active for nothing but a thought. O how familiar is a God in Christ with sinful dust! The Lord enabled me to some large meditations on these words, *Let Christ in all things have the pre-eminence.* I saw him to have the pre-eminence above all relations.—Compare him with a husband; he saith, *Thy Maker is thy Husband; the God of the whole earth shall be called.*—Compare him with a brother; he is the blessed brother born for adversity; *a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.*—Compare him with sons; he is the Sun of righteousness,

that *arise*th with healing under his wings.—Compare him with stars; he is *the bright and morning star*.—Compare him with roses; he is *the rose of Sharon*: he is the fairest rose in all the garden of God; all other roses derive their beauty from him: he makes them *comely thro' his comeliness put upon them*.—I saw Christ in all things to have the pre-eminence.

After these sweet views of glorious Christ, when I got any sleep, I was sore distressed with the enemy. I often dreamed that God was inflicting some awful judgment upon me; or that I was committing some great sin against God: thereby I was filled with abhorrence at myself. I thought the enemy's policy was to fill me with hard thoughts of God. While I was awake, I was allowed to behold God reconciled in Christ, and well-pleased for his righteousness sake. I was persuaded he would afflict me no more than what was for his own glory, and my good: but when I was in my sleep, I was almost frightened out of my judgment with these fears. However, when I awaked, the Lord composed my mind by his word; sometimes with these words, Luke xxii. 31. *Behold Satan hath desired to sift you as wheat is sifted; but I have prayed for thee: with that word, The God of peace will bruise Satan under your feet shortly*.—One time I was very desirous that the Lord would rebuke the enemy, and give me a little composed sleep. I was answered with Matth. iii. 15. *Suffer it so to be; for it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness*. Then I was persuaded it was my duty to desire to be kept from sin in it, more than to be delivered from it, since a God of infinite wisdom saw it fit it should be suffered.

My exercise now, for the most part, was meditation; and in it I was made to look back on my former ways: every step thereof filled me with abhorrence. And I thought that motto, *Self, Self*, might be written upon all my religious duties. O to have self dethroned and Christ enthroned.—I had no pleasure in looking

back to this world ; but so far as I could remember something of God, from such and such a sermon. And when I remembered his loving-kindness, and the enmity of my own heart, my unbelief and ingratitude, especially the sin of unbelief lay heavy upon my conscience. When I remembered my younger years, I could believe the love of God no longer than he shined on his own word ; but razed the foundation, as if God had changed his love, when I was changed in frame. Oh ! the many wounds I have given glorious Christ by my unbelief. I thought I heard my kind Lord complain, *Ye have broken me with your whorish heart ; ye have wounded me in the house of my friends. Is this thy kindness for thy friend ?* 2 Sam. xvi. 17. The consideration of these things brought sighs from my heart, and tears from mine eyes : but the only ground of my confidence before God was, the doing and dying of my Lord Jesus.

At one time I was so far shaken, that I could draw no comfort from former promises, so far as I remember ; but, in a very violent manner, was made to act faith on the faithfulness of God, engaged in these words, *If we confess our sins, God is faithful to forgive us our sins : with these, The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*—Glory to God, that it is not said, from *this* and *that* sin ; but from *all* sin.

After this a very puzzling question arose in my mind, from what our Lord said of Mary, *She loved much, because much was forgiven her.* I thought how could that be, that so much was forgiven me, and I could love Christ so little ? It was a heavy burden sometimes, that I could love Christ so little. I could never say with Peter, *Lord, thou who knowest all things, knowest that I love thee :* but I could appeal to him, *Lord, thou who knowest all things, knowest I DESIRE to love thee.*

One Sabbath-day, when the sacrament was in the place where I used to hear, it came to my remembrance the fair days of the Son of man that I had seen, when

the garments of our glorious Bridegroom smelled of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, whereby I was made glad, I found a vehement desire arise in my soul to be at the ordinance again, to behold his glory there: and immediately I was seized with such a discontented disposition, that I could not attain to patience, till the Lord reached me with a conviction of my sin and folly, from Judges xi. 35. *And Japhet vowed a vow unto the Lord, and he said, I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I cannot go back.* O what a sermon the Lord preached to me from these words! He brought to my mind what had passed betwixt him and my soul several years before, which I had no remembrance of. It was impressed on my mind, as if the Lord had said, “Do ye not mind the day when I discovered to you
 “my glory, and darkened all created glories to you?
 “Did ye not then put a blank in my hand, to fill it
 “up with what was most for my own glory? Have I
 “not granted you what ye asked me?” My petition then was, that he would keep me about his own hand, and keep my interest in himself clear to me, under the trial. O with what shame and confusion of face was I filled before a holy God? I might have said with the woman of Samaria, *He told me all things that ever I did, is not this the Christ?* I had not only opened my mouth to the Lord, but gone back, and altogether forgotten it.

I asked one of the family, when they came from the ordinance, where the ministers had their texts? They answered me that such a minister preached on Japhet's vow. I said to them, Well, the Lord has preached to me from that same text this afternoon. O the wonderful condescendence of God, in bringing to my remembrance what I had so long forgot; and in giving me a new meal upon these old visits, notwithstanding my great ingratitude to him. I had often resolved to be content with the Lord for my portion: this made me often cry unto him, *Thy vows are upon me, O God;* enable me to perform them.

Another difficulty I laboured under was, I knew not the voice of the rod: this made me beg of God, that he would search heart and reins, and discover every wicked way in me. It is a singular favour from the Lord to know the voice of a rod; yet, he has been pleased, in his adorable sovereignty, to favour some of his saints with it. When the land of Israel was under a famine, David inquired of the Lord concerning the meaning of that rod, and the Lord answered him, that it was for *the bloody house of Saul*, 2 Sam. xxi. 1. Rebecca also enquired of the Lord concerning her rod: and the Lord answered her, Gen. xxv. 22. I saw also from the Lord's word, a relation between the sin and the judgment, Judges i. 7. There is a relation also between Adoni-bezek's sin and his judgment. Also Lev. x. 1, 2. They offered strange fire on the altar; therefore fire came from the Lord on them, and they died. But this I could not see; therefore it made me cry unto the Lord, *Shew me why thou contendest with me.*

At this time I was visited by a minister who spoke to this purpose; "He told me, the Lord afflicted some of his people sovereignly, as was to be seen from his own testimony concerning Job, chap. i. 8.; yet the furnace, he observed, discovered much scum in Job, as we might see, chap. xxxiv. He also said, gold was the purest kind of metal; yet the fire discovered some dross in it. And he likewise added, it was so with the purest of God's saints; the furnace always discovered some dross in them." I was made to look upon this as coming from the Lord; for the man knew nothing of my condition. Though I did not see a particular cause why the Lord afflicted me, yet the furnace made much scum to appear that I saw not before. Mr. Gray saith in a sermon, "That the rod hath one of three voices to a Christian; the voice of the rod, is either to mortify his predominant idols; to try his predominant graces; or to set him on that which is his predo-

minant duty." I was made to consider a little on the second of these; but often I was afraid I had committed some secret sin, for which the Lord was contending with me: it sent me many errands to the throne of grace, till it pleased the glorious hearer of prayer to discover his mind, concerning the rod, from his own word, John ix. 3. *And Jesus said unto them, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God might be made manifest in him.* Then I saw the Lord designed a manifestation of his own work, by the rod. These words were also brought to my mind, 1 Pet. i. 7. *The trial of your faith being more precious than that of gold that perisheth; though it be tryed with fire it shall be found to the praise, honour, and glory at the appearance of Jesus Christ.* By this I was persuaded, that the Lord designed the trial of faith, together with a manifestation of his own works. But I thought that the honourable part of it, when it is tryed, *It shall be found to praise, honour, and glory at the appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ;* and concerning which I was glad: but when I thought of its being a *long rod*, and affliction being compared to *fire*, and fire being in its own nature a very trying thing; I began to shrink at the thoughts of it: but presently the Lord supported me with the words, *My grace shall be sufficient for thee, and my strength made perfect in thy weakness,* 2 Cor. xii. 9. Then I was made to believe, that our Lord sent none awarfare on their own charges: then I thought, no matter how heavy the burden be, if I get strength to bear it; no matter how bitter the cup be, if I get grace to drink it off. This was a sweet ground for praise under all my heavy afflictions: I saw the rod in the hand of a loving Father, and made me sweetly to acquiesce in his infinite wisdom, and to believe he saw it all for my good. This made me often say, *The cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it? O that he may enable me to drink it with courage, and to his own glory.*—This was the fourth year of my trouble, and the year 1761.

During the continuance of my trouble, I was often visited by many of the Lord's dear children; some of whom, I was no ways acquainted with, when in health, nor so much as had ever seen, that I knew of. Many of their visits were very refreshing to me; and the Lord eminently countenanced them for a blessing to my soul. —Meditation was now become a delightful exercise to me; and some of the glorious days I formerly enjoyed, in attending upon the Lord in his ordinances, were very supporting to me. Some subjects I had formerly heard Mr. Cock upon, were now a new feast to me: particularly one very remarkable Sabbath, I remember he preached on Psalm lvii. 1. *Be merciful unto me, O God; be merciful unto me, for my soul trusteth in thee.* —This was a very sweet subject to my soul. In the forenoon I got a view of the mercy of God, extended through our Lord Jesus Christ, with application to myself. After the sermon was over, two things induced me to go to a secret place for prayer: the one was the ground I saw for praise; the other was, that the Lord might come forth with and countenance his servant in the afternoon, and give him a door of utterance and a door of entrance into the hearts of sinners: to which I was answered, *I will cause them that love me to inherit substance, and I will fill all their treasures,* Prov. viii. 21. So far as I can remember, I forgot myself, there was such a concern laid on my spirit for the church in general, with a view of our great backslidings from the Lord; particularly our great breach of personal engagements and vows to the Lord; the breach of our baptismal and sacramental vows; our breach of national covenants which our forefathers swore to the Lord with uplifted hands, which many are now ashamed to own: These, and many other things, made me often fear that the Lord would depart from our land. I got leave to lament over them before the Lord, and to pour out my soul into his bosom. The Lord was graciously pleased for a ground

of hope to bear in upon my spirit, That he would yet marry sons and daughters to himself in this land, and rejoice over them as a bridegroom over his bride.

In the entry of public worship in the afternoon, the cxvi. Psalm was sung;

I love the Lord, because my voice

And prayers he did hear:

I, while I live, will call on him,

Who bow'd to me his ear, &c.

I thought none had more cause to love the Lord than I had, for he had both heard and answered my prayer.—O the astonishing love and condescendency of God in what followed! I am afraid, in speaking of such divine mysteries, that I *darken counsels by words without knowledge*. It pleased the Lord to draw aside the vail, and to discover a glorious Trinity of Persons, three in one and one in three, shining brightly in the person of the man Christ Jesus;—in him who is *the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person*. This glorious sight almost swallowed me up in wonder; and there was no strength like to remain with me while I beheld it, which made me cry to the Lord for more strength to behold these divine mysteries. These divine mysteries had two sweet effects upon my soul: They filled me with a holy awe and dread of God, and fear of sinning against him: and then I was filled with a sweet and joyful wondering. When I was musing on these divine mysteries, these words run in my mind, *Will God in very deed dwell with men?* Behold the tabernacle of God is with men!

These glorious and delightful discoveries had some impression on my spirit till next Sabbath morning. When I awakened out of my sleep, I found my Beloved was gone. Oh, the sad change that took place! I thought all the vermine of hell was a-foot: and that hell itself could not have bred such a wicked creature as I was in my own sight. I essayed private duties;

but I found the Lord in none of these. Then I said, O to be at the public ordinances again, possibly I will find him there. Mr. Cock preached on the forefaid text; but it was very tasteless to me, for I could not take up God reconciled in Christ. When the sermon was over, I wist not what to do, nor where to find him: it came into my mind that the disciples went to the place where Jesus was wont to resort: then I went to the place where I found him the day before in prayer. I durst not bow a knee before him, his awful Majesty made me afraid, my heart was filled with such vile, abominable, and unbecoming thoughts of God. O how glad would I have been of deliverance from them?—Then came the enemy with his old temptation, but with his hook covered with a new bait on it. He first represents the secrecy of the place, and the water therein, saying, thereby you would put an end to indwelling sin: all former proposals of this temptation I instantly abhorred; but this one was agreeable to my inclination to have an end put to indwelling sin: but ere ever I could well draw a conclusion about it, the Lord seasonably stepped in for my relief with these words, *He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved.* There I got another new proof of the Lord's faithfulness, in not suffering me to be tempted above what he made me able to bear; this afforded me a new ground of praise to him for my deliverance.

On another Sabbath morning I was much perplexed with the fears of apostacy; I often feared that one day or other I would fall by the hand of the enemy. While I thought upon the great dishonour that would be done to God thereby; it pleased the Lord to bear in that sweet word, *He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; he that keepeth thee will not slumber.*—This Sabbath Mr. Cock preached on these words, *In him shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, and in him shall they glory.* He mentioned many seasons that believers were to glory in; such as, temptation, trouble, desertion, &c.: these

seasons were very sweet to my soul. And the relation that the Lord stood in to me of being my Keeper, exceedingly added thereunto.

The four years before my trouble did far exceed my former years, for much sweet communion and fellowship with the Lord in public ordinances; and I had the happy privilege of attending upon them every Sabbath. I often got the secret wickedness of my heart laid open, and former experiences confirmed, that I might say of a truth, *The watchman found me out.* The matchless glory and excellency of our Lord Jesus also often ravished my soul by his love; yea, pained my soul for the want of full possession. I longed often to be gone, that I might get to the immediate embracements of Jehovah and the Lamb in the upper sanctuary.

Mr. Cock delivered several sweet sermons from Rev. xix. 7. *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.* He spoke of its being a great day upon three accounts? First, he said it is a festival-day; *Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.*—Secondly, It is a marriage-day; *I will betrothe thee unto me for ever.*—Thirdly, a coronation-day. He observed that in the day of believing, the believer set the crown upon king Solomon's head; and it was the day of the gladness of his heart, and the day of the gladness of the believer's heart: *Behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him.* He also spoke largely of what sort of a bride the Lamb got her: and said, "He got her a blind bride, a deaf bride, a naked bride, a polluted bride; and, withal, she was unwilling: Nay, she is, so to speak, tied neck and heel to the covenant of works; he got her a divour, and he left her so: for she was no sooner out of arrears to law and justice, than she was sunk deep in arrears to the sovereign grace of God." He gave a very large and extensive offer of the worthy and glorious Lamb,

to all within the walls, and without the walls of the house : and beseeched us, all by the joys of heaven and terrors of hell, to-match with the glorious and worthy Lamb. I felt a divine power coming along with the offer, by which my soul was drawn out to embrace the living Lamb of God, and to acquiesce in him as all my salvation, and all my desire.—My soul was filled with a sweeter sense of the love of God, than it is possible for me to express.

It hath pleased the Lord, under my trouble, sometimes to give me a sweet meal upon these, and many other sweet visits. It was often impressed on my mind, before my trouble commenced, that I had some great trial, or death itself to meet with. When I considered the Lord's way with the saints formerly, I was more confirmed of it, that by singularly appearing to them, by his love-visits, he was either preparing them for great duties, or great dangers ; and that his design thereby was that they might be the better in case to perform duty, or to bear up under dangers. And sometimes he anoints them by the Spirit before-hand, for their being suitably prepared for the duty or trial. Sometimes, in the duty of meditation, it pleased the Lord to draw aside the vail, whereby I got a discovery of the love of God in Christ from eternity ; and saw, as it were, my name written in the Lamb's book of life. O what an enriching portion I saw a God in Christ to be ! I thought they could want nothing that had him for their portion. I saw also, that let them have what they would, who wanted the blessed God, they enjoyed nothing but shadows, without the substance.

Under these glorious discoveries the Lord often filled my mouth with arguments, and said unto me, *What would ye that I should do unto you ?* There came both a heart melting and a humbling power alongst with it ; which laid me in the dust before him, under a sense of my vileness, and want of knowledge what to ask of him. I often said unto him, " Lord, thou

who taught thy disciples to pray, teach me to ask what is for thy glory." I often opened my mouth to this purpose, "Lord I desire to be content with any trial that thou seeest fit to appoint me for thy glory." I was very often induced to put up these two requests, "Keep me about thy own hand under the trial; and keep my interest in thyself clear to me."—I must say to his praise he has granted me my request hitherto.

I was often made to believe, that the faith of an interest in our Lord Jesus would be the best support under any trial. I was impressed with the thoughts of a trial from several scriptures, by which I apprehended the Lord called me to prepare to meet him in the rod of affliction: but some of them were very dark, and also wreath-like; particularly *Exod. xxxiii. 5. Put off thy ornaments that I may know what to do unto thee.* *Amos iv. 12. Because I will do thus unto thee; prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.*—A little before my trouble began, I could not take a thought about my lawful calling, further than the present day; but my thoughts were hedged in by these words, *Exod. xix. 9. Be ye ready against the third day.* *Mal. iii. 1. The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come.* Those words had such an impression on my mind, that I ordered all my outward concerns, as though I had been instantly to die.

The next day, however, after all this, I found a great aversion in my mind to meet with trouble, from several considerations: in my former trouble, I had my father to sympathize with me; but now he was removed by death. Another reason was, my present circumstances in the world; in regard I had little but what was in the promise: for, in the year 1752, I lost all my worldly substance by the hand of thieves.—Before this time, the Lord taught me, in some measure, a dependance on himself for a covering of his own righteousness to cover my naked soul with: but, till now, I never knew what it was to depend upon him for a covering to my body, and for all I needed

in time and for eternity. — At this time it pleased the Lord to bear in those sweet words, Phil. iv. 19. *My God shall supply all your needs, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.* These words were sweeter to me than thousands of gold or silver, or any riches the world could afford.

But to return where I was, to my present trial. I must say, to the praise of God, I have been in all my straits revived by his word. At this time he supported me by these words, Exod. xxxiii. 19. *I will make all my goodness to pass before thee.* Gen. xxii. 14. *In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen, the Lord will provide.* O what of his goodness has been made to pass before me, both spiritual and temporal ! During these six years of my trouble, [*viz.* since 1757.] many a display of his faithfulness have I seen, in his opening the hearts of his people to supply my wants, which hath often set me a wondering that any of them took notice of me, so vile and unworthy a creature, and less than the least of his mercies. While I was meditating, these sweet words came into my mind, *All things are yours, and ye are Christ's : You shall see greater things than these,* John i. 50. By those streams I was led to the fountain head, to view the love of God from eternity, and the glorious display of the covenant of redemption ; and how that with Christ he would freely give us all things. O the height and the depth, the breadth and length of the love of God, it passeth knowledge !

But I return where I was. Again, those words ran much in my mind, *Take this rod in thy hand, therewith thou shalt do signs.* I think it implied a call in it to take the staff of the promise in the hand of faith ; and sure I am, there is much need of the staff of the promise in the hand of faith, to walk upon a sea of troubles.

Having now gotten a clear view of a lengthened-out rod, I was much afraid of security and stupidity under it : this made me often cry to the Lord, that he would

make me some how active for his own glory, and not to lie an idle and useless prisoner.—On the back of this, there was a concern laid on my spirit for the church, and for some particular persons, with whom I was acquainted. I got a clear view of their natural state, in Gen. i. 2. *And the earth was without form, and darkness was upon the face of the depth; and God said, Let there be light.* Man's understanding naturally is a dungeon of darkness, and without the image of God. I got much liberty in pleading, that the Spirit of God might move upon their souls, and give them *the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.* I thought I got a sweet view of that word concerning them, *And it shall be said of Zion, this man and that man was born therein.* After this, when I knew them commit sin, or omit duty, it was matter of exercise to me some whole nights at the throne of grace. There was little I heard or saw for some time but it was matter of prayer to me, that God, who ruleth in the kingdom of providence, would dispose all the dispensations of providence to his own glory.

It pleased God, at this time, to reveal a very dark providence by his word and spirit: it brought me into a great strait, from those considerations; I was afraid that I was meddling with things too high for me; but I stood in awe of those words, *I will destroy them, and not build them up, who observe not the operations of my hands.* On the other hand, I was afraid of quenching the Spirit; and so would have provoked the Lord to withdraw. I saw much need of divine wisdom to guide in the middle path of judgment: I found one party in my soul that was for carnal ease, and let the matter happen as it would; I found another party in my soul that said, that is not the way to glorify God; *Abraham was strong in faith, giving glory to God.*—It was matter of many errands to the throne of grace; and the Lord was graciously pleased to give me new confirmation from his word: and he said, *Will I*

hide from Abraham that which I have a mind to do? But, alas! I could not believe there were so many opposites in the way of the accomplishment of the promise.

At this time I was visited by a minister; and I thought I would ask his mind concerning the matter: He made his visit short, and went about prayer; and in prayer he had these words,—“ Lord, thou in thy “ adorable sovereignty hast been pleased to reveal the “ secrets of thy covenant to every believer; but to “ some believers, thou art pleased to reveal the secrets “ of thy providence.” — This was very refreshing to me. When it pleased the Lord to bring the matter to pass, I got a glorious manifestation of the glory of his truth, and also of his wisdom shining in the accomplishment of it, and his wonderful condescendency. And these words afforded me sweet ground of meditation, *The works of righteousness is peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever*, Isa. 32. 17.

Another very remarkable act of God's kindness to me, and to the land also, so far as I can remember, was in the 1760. We were suddenly alarmed that the French forces were landed, or near to land. I was often afraid, when I considered my own sin, and the sins of the land, that the Lord, in his righteous judgment, would make these wicked men the rod in his hand to punish us for our iniquities. When I considered our breach of solemn covenants, and the despising of glorious Christ, in the offers of the gospel; and also the profaning of his name by false swearing, and the profaning of his holy day; together with the awful divisions amongst the godly; for these, and many other evils, I was truly afraid, that the Lord would tear and go away. I often thought, Oh! shall we be the unhappy generation that will sin the Lord away from Scotland, where he has had his possession for so long a time?

Some reckon our Lord was not above fifteen years ascended, when he sent the glorious gospel to Scotland,

by means of persecution. We are also told that Donaldie, a Christian king, established Christianity by law in the year of our Lord 203, and broke down the bulwarks of Paganism. Our Lord hath likewise taken in-festment of Scotland six times by solemn national covenant: and he hath had martyrs in Scotland, asserting his kingly office and royal prerogatives at the expence of their blood. But, alas! what matter of lamentation is it, that our Lord is so robed of his royal prerogatives in Scotland, whose prerogative it is to set watchmen upon Zion's walls; and this power put into the hands of profane lords and lairds, and the poor people robed of their right of chusing their own pastors? It is also for matter of lamentation, that so many are strengthening the hands of intruders and hirelings, that have entered the house of God.—Instead of testifying against them, few are valient for the truth upon the earth. *Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?* Jer. ix. 6.

I remember, about eight years ago, we were threatened with a bloody sword. I was much afraid the Lord would send the sword to Scotland to avenge the quarrel of his broken covenant. The Lord was pleased to give me that view, that he would avert the stroke for some time, from Prov. vi. 10. *Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep.* Oh! I am afraid, all our deliverances are as a sleep-drink; for we have not returned to *give glory to God, before he cause darkness.* I am afraid that there is an awakening abiding Scotland, that will arouse her out of her security. I think the Lord is saying concerning her, as it is in Amos ix. 9. *I will sift her as corn is sifted in a sieve. I will bring a third part through the fire; and I will leave in her a poor and an afflicted people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord,* Zeph. iii. 12. At this time, however, when I heard the French were near to land, the Lord bore in these words with life

and power, *I will put a hook in his nose, and a bridle in his lips, and turn him back by the way which he came*, Isa. xxxvii. 29. *Thou shalt not see a people of a deeper speech than thou canst understand*, Isa. xxxiii. 19. *Thou shalt come to thy grave in peace, and thine eyes shall not see all the evil that I will bring upon this place*, 2 Kings xxii. 20. From these words I got a view that the Lord would avert the judgment, at this time also; and that I would never see the French, nor ever suffer harm by them. Then I was made to plead with the Lord, that he himself would turn back our enemies in the way, that instruments might not rob him of his glory. And I was informed the wind was the instrument the Lord made use of to turn back our enemies at this time. O but our Lord is kind to prisoners.—I never got so far above the fear of his judgments, as at this time, when I could do nothing for myself: neither had I dependence on any other, but the Lord. I enjoyed a sweet composure of spirit, when the shot of a gun, or the beating of a drum would have set others a trembling about me.

These occurrences of providence induced me to make the three following reflections. 1. The reason why we were so much afraid of man, was because we feared God so little; for had we stood more in awe of God, we would have been less afraid of man: *The fear of man causeth a snare*. 2. I saw that a presumptuous faith had much need of fair weather; for I saw that it left these who had it in a storm, when they had most need of it. 3. I saw that the Lord was much displeased with us for the sin of ingratitude to him, from these words; *Were there not ten cleansed? But where is the nine?* Only one returned to give him the glory.

Another very remarkable act of the Lord's loving-kindness, and free love vouchsafed to me, was on a communion Saturday, when the family were gone to the ordinance. I was like to be overcome with sorrow; but I may say to the praise of the Lord, in all my straits,

I have been *revived by this his word alone*. He brought to my mind, with a very fresh sense of his love, 1 Cor. iii. 23. *All things are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. And what can David say more?* 2 Sam. viii. 20. I thought I might render it thus, What can David *have* more? or what would *I* have more than a *God in Christ*, and *all things* with him? It passeth the tongue of men or angels to speak of these *all things* that believers have: or tho' one were to write a large volume of them, they might say on the matter, as the queen of Sheba said of the wisdom of Solomon, the *half of it* hath not been told.—They are a field that will serve believers to travel in to eternity, and find no end of his treasures.

I shall enumerate a few of these *all things* which I saw at this time.—I saw the *love of God* to be mine from eternity; for, he saith, *You hath he chosen in Christ Jesus, before the world was*. I saw his love to be mine to eternity; for *he rests in his love*.—Also I saw *justice satisfied* in the Son of God, and love getting a honourable vent through him.—I saw him to be the *true tabernacle* where God and man meeteth together.—I saw him to be *God's way to us*, and *our way to God*; and the ravishing glory of God, that shined in the face of our Lord Jesus, filled my soul with wonder.—I think the Lord allowed me as large a feast all the three days of that solemnity as ever I enjoyed at a communion.—I seldom longed to be at the ordinances, but I was reproved by these, or some other words; *Have I been unto thee a barren wilderness or a land of darkness? or, laked ye any thing?* To which my soul was made to reply, “Truth, Lord; I have laked nothing: I have been at no loss by the want of ordinances.” I do not mention this to discourage any from attending on the ordinances of God's appointment; for *he delighteth more in the gates of Zion, than in all the dwellings of Jacob*. I only notice it, to shew how kind the Lord hath been to a poor unworthy prisoner, who am less than the least of his mercies,

One night I had a very sudden shock of trouble: in the meantime three young men came in providentially; I desired them to go about duty. One of them sung in the lxxiii. Psalm, from the 24th verse; by which the Lord brought to my mind what I once enjoyed at a communion, where I got a very humbling sight of the love of God, and the enmity of my own heart, which I think is the most humbling sight ever I saw: such a sight is more heart-melting and humbling than although one would live many years at mount Sinai. I was much afraid of sin, because of a wicked heart within, and a tempting devil and an insnaring world without. While I was thus perplexed, O how sweetly did the Lord bear in those words with light and joy, Psalm xlviii. 14 *That ye may tell it to the generations following: For this God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide even unto death.* I saw such a fullness in these words as made me say. O the remedy is as broad as the sore. I saw all in them that I needed in time and for eternity. In this night of distress the Lord brought them back to my mind, with a bright display of his faithfulness and sweet sense of his love; upon which I thought I could have ventured into eternity, depending upon his word.

But before the last of the three young men had gone about duty, the accuser of the Brethren, that sometimes accuseth man to God, and God to man, did accuse God to me, saying, in these words, *When ye make many prayers he will not hear you.* This set me upon examination in the sight of God and my own conscience, who were witness, first, as to the *motives* that induced me to the duty of prayer and praise. I was clear that it was the call of God that induced me to it, Psalm l. 15. *In the day of great trouble see that thou call upon me.* This being a time of great trouble, I thought it proper to imploy others to join with me, both in praying to God, and in praising of him. Secondly, I was made to examine upon what *grounds* I

desired we should be heard, or accepted. My conscience bore me witness, that it was the *doing* and *dying* of our Lord Jesus Christ, that was the only ground. It is the sweet-smelling sacrifice of our slain Lord that perfumes our persons and duties before God, and makes them ascend with acceptance before his throne.

Satan also suggested, that my sins would rise with me in judgment; and that he would pursue me before the judgment-seat. This filled me with great fear; and the Lord withdrew the sweet sense of his love. I resolved, however, to cast myself over upon him; and if I perished I would perish at Christ's feet, where never one perished. I waited with great fear to hear my sentence come from himself. I thought nothing but a word from his blessed lips, *who speaketh as never man spoke*, would satisfy me. O the astonishing condescendency of God to one of the vilest of sinners! O how sweetly did the Lord bear in those words, Isa. liv. 17. *Every tongue that riseth against thee in judgment will be condemn: This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord: with Jer. l. 20. In that day the iniquities of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, but they shall not be found!* Those words were sweeter to my taste than the honey-comb.

One day in August 1763. in the morning, one having asked me how I was supplied with respect to outward wants. I was very unwilling to answer that question; for I knew not well how to do it, in a consistency with the glory of God. While I was meditating about it, the Lord brought to my mind a singular act of his adorable sovereignty, which was this: one day as I was conversing with a neighbour, when she was going away, she told me that she was going to make ready for her family what I stood in need of, but I had it not. I turned my eyes towards the Lord in faith, that he could open her heart, or the hearts of others, to supply my wants. I must say to the praise

of the Lord, he brought me to himself, with all my straits; and often he gave me a new display of that glorious title he hath taken to himself, *The hearer of prayer*: and at this time also, just when I was praying, the very mercy came that I desired. I was set admiring the Lord's loving-kindness; and that word afforded me sweet ground of meditation, *Your Father knoweth ye have need of those things before ye ask them*, Matth. vi. 8. O but it is sweet to see a mercy come in the accomplishment of the promise, or the answer of prayer. If we were helped to observe the Lord's ways towards us, we might well say, *Who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders*? Through the whole of this day I got near access to God, except when I was interrupted by some coming in: he filled my mouth with arguments, and allowed me near access to him, as a man doth with his friend.

About the evening he displayed more of the divine glory. O the ravishing glory that shined in the face of our Emmanuel, *who is white and ruddy, the chief among ten thousand*; white in his divinity, ruddy in his humanity; white in his holiness, ruddy in his sufferings: *his mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely*. In the mean time I found a necessity for being changed, and made strong and spiritual to bear that weight of glory; and those words ran sweetly in my mind, *When Christ who is our life shall appear, he will also change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his glorious body*. Soon after this I fevered for some days together; but the Lord enabled me to something of a sweet wondering frame and meditation upon these divine mysteries. One day I was worse than I had been. After prayer, one said, "Amongst the many great things that God hath done for your soul, he will make this work for your good also." To this I replied, I am shipwrecked back to sea again; for I would fain have been put into the harbour.

One time when I was thinking upon the grave, and how that the sweet rose of Sharon had perfumed it for believers, the enemy suddenly suggested, How do ye know that ye will rise out of the grave again? The doctrine of the resurrection being a truth so clearly taught in the word of God, I never questioned the truth of it: yet so far did the temptation prevail, that I had a reluctance at the grave for some days, till the Lord shined again on these words, Isa. xxvi. 19. *Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise.* John vi. 44. *And I will also raise him up at the last day.* The Lord has often told me by experience, that the highest attainments will not serve in a new difficulty: nothing but new supplies from the fountain head could do my turn.

The Lord, who bringeth things new and old out of his treasures, the other day brought to my mind, a singular day in the year 1745. This year, the son of a Popish Pretender, upon the head of a Popish and malignant party, passed through part of the land, attempting to get the throne. Glory to God he got not his design.—I was sore afraid, if he got the throne, we would soon be deprived of the glorious gospel. One morning I was much weightied with the case of the church: it pleased the Lord to bear in these words with a very sweet heart-melting power, Hosea ii. 15. *I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness; and she shall sing as in the days of her youth, as in the day when I brought her out from the land of Egypt.* I would have been glad of some secret part, where I might have poured out my soul unto the Lord; for I could not well refrain tears of joy: but my employment at that time obliged me to be in company. Two observations from these words afforded me sweet ground of meditation; *And she shall sing there, as in the day I brought her up out of the land of Egypt.* I thought it respected the day when the Lord brought them out of the Egypt of a natural state; then the Lord ordinarily brings his

people into a wilderness of convictions, and distresses them less or more with a spirit of bondage. Some have seen God to be a God of terrible majesty, and all his attributes, as it were, in arms against them, when they got a sight of glorious Christ, and God pacified in him, for all that they had done. O what matter of a song doth such a sight afford them! There is little matter what a wilderness the Lord may bring me, or the church into, if he afforded us such matter of a song.—My second observation was from this consideration; I had then little experience of a Christian life. Some old Christians, whom I conversed with, said, that they had most communion with God in the days of their youth. This filled me with reluctance at old age; and made me long for death, that I might enjoy God. But surely I ought to have preferred the glory of God, above the enjoyment of him. Whatever respect these words have to the church, the Lord hath abundantly made them out to me: for he hath afforded me a song in the wilderness of my affliction, far above the days of my youth. I desire to bless the Lord for carving out so gentle a rod for me: he doth all things well.

The view of these three particulars, I think, helped to much patience under the rod. 1. To see the rod in the hand of a *loving father*. O but this helps much to sweeten a bitter cup. 2. To know the *Lord's voice* in the rod. 3. To see ourselves *less* than the least of his mercies: this helps to a song both of mercy and of judgment. The Lord often supported me from sinking by his word: sometimes by that word, that he would *maintain abundant peace*: and that he would *crown the year most liberally with his goodness*. That word was often borne in on my mind a little before my trouble, and thro' the time of my trouble, Mal. iii. 1. *The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come, even the Messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in.* Our Lord comes variously: he comes sometimes fatherly, to

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correct: sometimes wisely, to try: sometimes seasonably, to comfort and support under the trial. I looked then for his coming to receive me to himself, that *where he is, there I may be also; that I may behold his glory.* The glorious Redeemer saith, *Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me may be with me, that they may behold my glory.*

One time I was composedly thinking, O what can be the Lord's design in lengthening out so long a rod? Immediately I was answered with Isa. lxvi. 5. *Say, Let the Lord be glorified; he will appear to your joy.* It was impressed on my mind with a very heart-melting and humbling power, as if the Lord had said, *Let me glorify my wisdom, in ordering your rod: let me glorify my truth, in performing all the good I have promised you: let me glorify my power, in upholding you; and I will appear to your joy.* O astonishing condescendence of the great and eternal Jehovah, to say to sinful dust, *Let me glorify myself in you.* My soul was made sweetly to reply, *Lord, do as thou hast said: take glory to thyself out of thy prisoner.*—That word was much borne in on my mind, Exod. xiv. 13. *Stand still and see the salvation of God; with, he will appear to your joy.* The word *salvation* sometimes signifieth a temporal deliverance: but give what the Lord will, nothing less will satisfy my soul than conformity to God, and a complete deliverance from sin, and the in-being of it. I thought the Lord said unto me, in his adorable sovereignty, *Be it unto thee, even as thou wilt. Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly, according to thy word.

PERIOD ELEVENTH.

This period contains an account of her being consulted by a young man, relative to an important affair; how she was exercised concerning it, and what view she got of the matter.

TO speak to the Lord, is a very great matter; and to speak of the Lord's doings, is also a very great matter: *Who is sufficient for those things? but our sufficiency is of God.*

On the 26th day of May 1766, I had the opportunity of conversing with a young man: he spoke to this purpose, "I have been impressed to a duty some years, [viz. a sacred office in the Church;] but I know not whether the impression be from the Lord, or from Satan:" and he moreover added, "I would have your advice in that matter." I told him, I could give him none; because the duty is of so great importance. I also said unto him, that as the Lord shall enable me, I will lay the matter before him, who says, *Acknowledge me in all thy ways, and I will direct thy paths*; and what light the Lord is pleased to give, I will discover it unto you: The matter lay very heavy upon my spirit that night; and with the burden of it, I went to the Lord by prayer: but was very straitened for some time. However, I was made to take encouragement in prayer from that glorious title, *He is the hearer of prayer*, and hath been so to me: in many things he hath been both the hearer of prayer, and the answerer of prayer. I was made to observe, so far as I knew any inclination or bias in my own heart, to have the matter determinated any other way than the Lord pleased, was removed. I was made to plead, that he who knows the hearts of all men would determinate the matter by his word and Spirit.—In answer

thereto, at length, the Lord was graciously pleased to bear in on my spirit, Acts ix. 15. *He is a chosen vessel to bear my name unto the Gentiles*; and Ezek. iii. 1. *Eat the roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel, &c.* Then I was made to plead with the Lord more boldly, that he would glorify himself, in furnishing the young man with gifts and graces suitable to such an office; and that he would make him instrumental in glorifying God in the church. And while I was pleading, Jer. xxxi. 3. was sweetly borne in upon my spirit; *I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness will I draw thee.* I also got a very sweet and soul-ravishing view of our glorious High-Priest, the Lord Jesus Christ, of his being anointed with the oil of joy above his fellows; and of his anointing all the members of his mystical body: *We have an unction from the holy One, whereby we know all things.* This was a sweet night to me; and had a sweet impression for some days till I was hearing one read Mr. Erskine's sermons, Luke xxi. 31, 32. intitled, *The power and policy of Satan, bound and baffled by the Lord Jesus Christ.* I began to fear the matter to be a delusion: if my deceitful heart do not deceive me, I desire to bring experiences to the bar of God's word, and ordinances of his appointment to be tried. If our experience do not abide the trial of God's word, we have ground to suspect them. Mr. Boston saith, "God's word is always a friend to the work of the Spirit of God;" and I am persuaded it is a truth. After examining the matter, I could see no warrant from the word of God to prove the matter to be a delusion; but could not get above the fears of it: the fear always influenced me to prayer; and I may speak it to the praise of God, he allowed me near access to himself, and often filled my mouth with arguments concerning the young man. However, when I was allowed nearest access to God, it was often injected into my mind, what if all this be a delusion. Oh! this distressed me, and filled me with

abhorrence at myself, because of my unbelief, and ingratitude to God : and I was often reproved by one of those three scriptures ; *O thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt ?* Rom. xiii. 12. *Cast off the works of darkness.* 1 Sam. xv. 29. *The Strength of Israel will not lie.* I had some thoughts of desiring the prayers of one of my acquaintances, whom I knew the Lord had been pleased sometimes to favour with his secrets : but I was afraid of provoking the Lord to anger by seeking further evidences from him. Whilst I was hesitating about the matter, the Lord was pleased graciously to breath upon these two scriptures, Matth. xviii. 19. *And Jesus said, If two of you agree upon earth, as touching any thing which ye shall ask, it shall be done unto you of my Father which is in heaven.* Isa. xlv. 11. *Thus saith the Lord, the holy One of Israel, and his Maker, Ask me of things to come, concerning my sons, and concerning the works of my hands, command ye me.* This is a very great and wonderful matter, the great God commanding us, sinful dust, to *command him*.—O the glory, the majesty, and condescendence of God, that appeared to me in those words, was very great. What can I say of it ? *Come and see* will best suffice.

The woman whom I had consulted about this matter, said unto me, that those scriptures occurred unto her, with respect to the young man, Eccles. ix. 10. *Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.* Psalm xx. 4. *Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.* Notwithstanding of all this, I was often at this with it, *Lord help me to believe, for I am an ungrateful wretch.*

One day when I was in my conflict, the Lord taught me several lessons : it is long since the Lord began to teach me some of them.—O I have been an idle scholar ; I have need to be taught them over and over again.

1. I was made to see, that although the Lord would bring home with power upon my heart, all the promises of the Bible, suitable to that matter I could not believe them.

2. I saw more clearly, that faith is the gift of God; and that it is the work of God to believe. I saw that without him I could do nothing.

3. I saw myself to be an ignorant beast before God, and that I had not the knowledge of the holy: Our Lord saith, *My sheep know my voice, and a stranger will they not follow*, John x. 5. I saw the want of knowledge to discern the Lord's voice in his word from Satan's, was a part of my distress: in the meantime, I thought our Lord said unto me, as he said to Philip, John xiv. 9. *Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip?* I thought it was as if the Lord had said unto me, "Have I not given you many a manifestation of my glory, and many an intimation of my love, and what a shame is it, you have not known me, Philip?" O the heart-melting and heart-affecting power that came along with these words! His loving-kindness was like to overcome me.—The views of my ignorance and ingratitude to him, brought sighs from my heart, and tears from my eyes.

4. I was made to see, and also to consider, if I had attained to as much stability in other matters, as the Lord has helped me to about my own salvation, I would forget to sympathize with others, that are tossed with doubts and fears as I am.

At another time I was essaying prayer, and was pleading the out-making of the promise with respect to the young man; but with a great battle and struggle I wan to say, *Lord, do as thou hast said*.—When I was thus employed, it pleased the glorious hearer of prayer to shine, by his Spirit, upon these scriptures; Acts ix. 15. with Jer. xxxi. 3. xxxiii. 14. *I will take them one of a city, and two of a family*, Isa. lvi. 7. It pleased the Lord to draw aside the vail, and to give me such a glimpse of his glory, as made all doubts and fears to disappear, before the brightness of that light. O the bright and ravishing view I got of that everlasting love of God; *I have loved thee with an everlasting love*;

therefore with loving-kindness will I draw thee. I the glorious and eternal Jehovah is the lover; O happy man, happy woman, that is beloved by him: *Happy is that people, whose God is the Lord.* The ravishing views of that love enflamed my heart with love to God, and to the object beloved by him. I think, when the Lord in his adorable sovereignty is pleased to give a view of his love, or intimation of his mind with respect to another; the one that is privileged with it, at that time, cannot but taste of the sweetness of that love. I think it is a part of that holy and sweet pleasure that is to be found in Wisdom's ways; *Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace,* Prov. iii. 17. I never all my life got such a bright view of the attribute of divine love: *God is love; he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,* 1 John iv. 16.—This was a day I ought to remember with thanksgiving, being July 9th, 1766.

When I spoke of the matter to the young man, it was with some measure of fear, arising from the consideration of that holy and reverential fear that is due unto the Lord, either in speaking of him, or speaking to him. I was also afraid, least there should be any mistake in the matter, whereby the Lord would be dishonoured. And perceiving him very glad, I was afraid of self-confidence in him, or vain-glory: but his words gave no evidence of it; thereupon those words were sweetly borne in upon me, *Yea, they shall sing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the Lord,* Psalm cxxxviii. 5. *Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways,* Isa. lxiv. 5.

After the young man went from me, I was essaying to plead for a blessing upon our conference: spiritual conference is a duty; to my sweet experience, I have often found it pleasant. The Lord breathed upon, and gave countenance to it, as he did to the disciples, Luke xxiv. 15. But whilst I was thus employed, two scrip-

tures were darted into my mind, whereby I was forewounded, and wist not what to do, for they were contrary to all the former. I thought before I would draw a conclusion about them, I would look to the Lord for his direction: and while I looked to the Lord for his direction, those two scriptures came, *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord*, 1 Cor. xv. 58. *Your adversary the devil, walketh about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour*, 1 Pet. v. 8. By these two it was very evident to me, that the former was from Satan; they had very different effects. 1. The word that came from the Lord, lead to the Lord. 2. Light accompanied the word; *The enterance of thy word gives light, &c.* 3. It filled the soul with a sweet composure, and excited to duty. —The native tendency of the other was to drive away from the Lord; and to fill the soul with horror, darkness, and confusion.

One night I could get no rest; sleep went from me, such a concern was laid upon my spirit for the young man's eternal salvation. I essayed prayer again and again, till that word came, Mark ix. 19. *Bring him unto me.* Then I was made to plead that absolute promise, and to say, 'Lord, I cannot bring him unto thee; but thou hast said, *When I am lifted up, I will draw all men after me.* Put him amongst some of those *all men* thou wilt draw after thee: thou art a Prince exalted at the Father's right-hand, to give repentance and remission of sins:' and whilst I was pleading, that other word came, which was very sweet and confirming to me; *I will betrothe thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betrothe thee unto me in righteousness, in judgment, and in loving-kindness; and thou shalt know the Lord*, Hosea ii. 19, 20.

I remember, about five years ago, when it pleased the Lord to intimate to me, that I was to have a long rod of affliction, I was afraid of security and stupidity, which made me cry, 'O Lord, glorify thyself in an

‘useless prisoner, and enable me to glorify him upon the earth.’ I may observe it to his praise, he wonderfully disappointed my fears; by often giving me a burden of affliction upon my body, or a burden of concern upon my spirit; and very often part of both: the burden of others often became my burden; and the great motive that induced me to it, was the glory of God: that God may be glorified in over-ruling their difficulties to his own glory and their good. — I have ground to observe it also, to his praise and glory, that when the Lord allowed me near access to himself for others, I never wanted for myself. *These are parts of his ways; and how small a portion do I know of him?*

GREENOCK, }
August 4th, 1766. }

MARION LAIRD.

C O N C L U S I O N.

The Conclusion of the MEMOIRES, containing Reflections on the foregoing Exercise.

FROM the beginning of April 1740, to the time of my outgate, so near as I can remember, was about the month of July, 1741. And upon the whole, I shall make the following reflections.

SECT. I. *Some general Observations.*

1. I HAVE often reflected with wonder at the *sovereign free grace and love of God*; which is neither procured by our good, nor hindered by our evil. At the time when the Lord brought me to hear the glorious gospel, which he blessed for my awakening and conviction, I had never come to a greater height in sinning, and drinking in youthful pleasures. The Lord set home the law, in its spiritual extent; he led

me into the dark recesses of the heart, to see what abominations were done there in the chambers of imagery. I stood amazed at the sight; and was made to wonder, that such a wretch as I was so long out of hell. This could not be but a surprizing sight to one who had an high opinion of herself. — A little before this, I thought if three would go to heaven, I would be one of them; though verily I sought righteousness by the works of the law, by which no sinner can be justified.

2. I have wondered at the infinite *power* and *wisdom of God*, that bore me up under such a load of guilt and sense of wrath; and yet suffered me neither to sink under it, nor split on the Rock of despair. You may read my case in Deut. xxviii. 65, 66, 67. I had no assurance of my life a moment being out of hell.

3. I wondered at the *divine patience*, bearing so long with me; and at the *wisdom of God*, in keeping me so long at Sinai. I see that less of the law-work would not do: my proud heart thought it below it to come down from the tree of legality, and to submit to the righteousness of Christ for justification before God, and acceptance with him. I found *self* was the sticking point with me: that a hard saying, *Let a man deny himself*. To be denied to religious self was like the cutting off a right hand, or the plucking out a right eye. The Lord continued thundering from mount Sinai, until he made me despair of hope by the works of the law: *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life; he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him*, John iii. 36. Then Christ was manifested in the character of a Redeemer. O how sweet was this relation, a Redeemer! *He was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law*. Whilst this glorious discovery lasted, it was full of ravishing sweetness: many things contributed to

make it so; particularly the case wherein it found me condemned by God, and by my own conscience. I was like to sink under the fear and pressure of a present execution of the sentence. Was it any wonder that the news of pardon and forgiveness was sweet to one in such a case? I mention not these things for my own commendation; but to the praise and glory of his grace, who hath made us *accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. i. 6.

SECT. II. *Containing an account of my experience about the duty of writing.*

AFTER the forementioned exercise, I wrote a few remarks, intending only the help of my own memory.—About that time my father took trouble, which issued in his death, which was the occasion of my going afterwards to service.—I would here, by the way, observe a few considerations, that lay heavy upon me about the time of my father's death. It was not only the want of him, though a loving and affectionate father, but the loss which the family would sustain. The last time I spoke with him I asked him how matters were with him? He answered me, 'I get some 'blinks of the Lord's countenance; but when he 'comes, he stays short till he is away again.' A few days thereafter he went to the undisturbed rest of glory, where clouds would no more cover from the face of our glorious Lord. When I considered the great loss the poor family was at, by the want of him; there being nothing like grace in any of them; when I considered, where Christ dwells not by his Spirit, they could not dwell in Christ by faith; where there is no union to the Lord Jesus, there can be no communion with him: what is there then but the strong man armed keeping the house, and his goods are at ease? The consideration of those things gave me many errands to the throne of grace, crying to the Lord that

he would plant the graces of his Spirit into their souls. The glorious hearer of prayer caused me to hope upon that word, concerning some of them, *I will cause you to pass under the rod, and will bring you into the bond of the covenant*, Ezek. xx. 37.

But I return to the purpose in hand.—Those copies I had written, I laid into my chift. When I was putting on or off my cloaths, and got my eye upon them, I was often challenged by one of those two scriptures, *If any man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him*, Heb. x. 38. *And Jesus said unto him, If any man putteth his hand to the plow and looketh back, he is not fit for the kingdom of God*, Luke ix. 62. I wist not what to do, for I neither had an opportunity for writting, nor had I a desire for it. I observed, in our reading of the scriptures, morning and evening in the family, what the word spoke to that purpose. I saw the duty to be founded on, and authorized from many places of scripture: I only mention a few of them. *It is a night to be much observed to the Lord, for bringing them out of the land of Egypt: this is that night of the Lord, to be observed of all the children of Israel, in all their generations*, Exod. xii. 42. How much more ought it to be observed unto the Lord, with gratitude and thankfulness, by those whom the Lord has brought forth from the Egypt of a natural state, a worse state than the Egyptian bondage?—*Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Christ?* John iv. 29.—*Come here all ye that fear God; and I will tell what he hath done for my soul*, Psalm lxvi. 16.—*For he established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel; which he commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children*, Psalm lxxviii. 4.—*Whoso is wise, and will observe those things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord*, Psalm cvii. 43.

—But the great question with me was, *Is it I*; is it *I*, the Lord calls to such a duty? Uzzah's putting his hand to the ark was good in itself; but he wanted

God's command to it, 2 Sam. vi. 7. *They offered strange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not: and there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them; and they died before the Lord, Lev. i. 2.*—Those, and the like scriptures, filled me with so much of the awe and majesty of God, as made me to tremble at the thoughts of such a duty, without a clear call from him.—The Lord said often unto me, Fear not, I have enjoined thee. At other times I was challenged by those words, *The servant that knoweth his master's will and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes.* I was reprov'd also by ministers in their doctrine, tho' they knew nothing of it; for I consulted with none of them: I consulted only with God, and the word of God, and my own conscience; *Acknowledge him in all thy ways, and he will direct thy paths, Prov. iii. 6.*

At length the Lord in his holy providence opened a door for that duty, by very trying dispensations: they were bitter to me as the gall and wormwood. I said, the Lord had dealt bitterly with me; I was so rude and ignorant, and as a beast before him.—He cut me off from youthful pleasures, things lawful in themselves, but unlawfully used, so far as they got Christ's room in my heart. I saw not then what a glorious design the Lord was carrying on by those bitter trials; but he hath let me see it since that time: and I desire, with all my heart, to bless him for them, upon a view of the Lord's way with me. Well may I say, *O Lord, who is like unto thee amongst the gods? who is like to thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders!* Exod. xv. 11. The Lord took me aside into the wilderness, and there he spake with me: he told me in part what he had done for me; and also what he would have me do for him. Then he removed the obstinacy that was in my will against the duty; and I sought further evidences from the Lord, by his word and Spirit, of his calling me to the duty. And I may say to his praise, he prepared my heart for prayer; and

bowed his ear and answered me by those three scriptures: I mention them in the order they occurred, and the views I got of them; Isa. xliii. 26. *Put me in remembrance.* I thought it was, as if the Lord had said, Put me in remembrance by telling others what I have done for thee: or cause my name to be remembered. *I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations,* Psalm xlv. 17. *Them that honour me, I will honour,* 1 Sam. ii. 30. This filled me with shame and blushing in the sight of a holy God; and made me to say, 'Lord, what can I do to thy honour? Lord, help me to honour thee in life, and in death. Lord, without thee I can do nothing: without thee let me desire to do nothing; but through thy grace strengthening me I can do all things: I can do all things thou callest me to: Lord, *Work it in me both to will, and also to do, of thy good pleasure; and do thou bear all the glory of it,* 1 Cor. xv. 58. *Be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know your labour is not in vain in the Lord.'*

By these three scriptures, the Lord fully satisfied me as to the clearness of his calling me to that exercise, and strongly fortified me against the trial he knew I had yet to meet with, both from Satan, and from the instruments he stirred up to oppose that exercise. *God hath chosen the foolish things of this world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of this world to confound the things that are mighty, that no flesh might glory in his presence: that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord,* 1 Cor. i. 27, 31.

SECT. III. *Containing an account of the temptations I laboured under, while I was employed in the duty of writing, and the way the Lord gave an out-gate therefrom.*

WHAT cometh from the Lord, in a way of love and grace, leadeth to him, in a way of love and duty. By

this exercise I was taught more than ever before, viz. a constant treading with heaven: new duties brought in new difficulties, and discovered new wants; and gave me repeated errands to the fountain of infinite fulness, in order to get them supplied. I am persuaded the Lord sends none awarfare on their own charges. —In a word, the Lord bears all the charges of his own work: blessed be his name.

I neither had education nor natural endowments for such an undertaking. Any memory I had was owing to the Spirit's bringing his own words to remembrance. —When the Lord, by his Spirit, shined upon his word and work, then I had a clear remembrance of both. I have cause to speak it, to the praise of the Lord, it hath often been his way with me, to bring old experiences to remembrance, with new discoveries of himself. Sometimes with brighter views of the glory of God, shining in the face of Jesus Christ; *The brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person*, Heb. i. 3. —At other times I got further views of the mystery of justification, and how that question was answered, that would have non-plussed men and angels to have answered it, how God would be just in justifying the ungodly, who saith, *I will by no means clear the guilty*, Exod. xxxiv. 7. It is done in a crucified Christ: *He was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him*. Upon the ground of his justice-satisfying, law-fulfilling, and law-magnifying righteousness, God is just in justifying the ungodly, in a consistency with all his other attributes and perfections; *Mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other*, in the person of the God-man, Emmanuel; God with us. — This way of saving sinners brings in a revenue of praise and glory to God in the highest. O wonderful wisdom; how brightly is it displayed in God's providing so well for his own glory, and the sinner's salvation!

This view endeared the Lord to my soul, and made me say upon the matter, *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do for thee?* But after these sweet manifestations of the love of God in Christ, ordinarily came my forest trials. Satan raised such a mist upon these truths, I found it a hard thing to win to a stedfast adherence to them, in the hour and power of darkness. Satan injected those, or the like hellish temptations; Hath God said so and so? or to call in question the being of some attribute or perfection in God; which struck at his very being, and the foundation of religion. It is the saying of a divine, "Experience is the mother of affection." By the experience I had of that temptation, I was taught more than ever before to sympathize with, and pray for, as I could, tho' not as I should, for ministers who are much in the study of divine truth, knowing they are men of the like passions with ourselves, and liable to the same temptations. I saw also that it was no wonder though they easily parted with truth, if they had a temptation to it, who never felt the power of God, or the saving influence of the truths of God upon their own souls; nor ever feasted on the ravishing sweetness of God, that is to be found in his word. *Thy word was found of me, and I did eat it; and it was to me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart,* Jer. xv. 16.

When I was fore shaken, and faith like to fail, then ordinarily the Lord brought to my remembrance, some part of his word, which confirmed me in the truth. I was shaken about when the Lord manifested himself in the promise. Then I saw matters, in the light of the Lord, to be what they were before; then I was both strengthened and encouraged in the way of the Lord.—I saw also cause to bless him for his word, and the teaching of his Spirit; had I wanted them but a little, I would soon have been, I thought, as great an athiest as was upon the earth. Whenever a temptation offered, how easily was I shaken about the clearest

revealed truths in the Bible? *Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have I the knowledge of the holy*, Prov. xxx. 2, 3. Such have been the condescendency of my sweet and altogether-lovely Lord, as to warn me of onsets from Satan, sometimes before they came, by those scriptures, *And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not*, Luke xxii. 31.: and, *Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil*, Eph. vi. 11. It is no easy matter to be sifted by Satan. O blessed be God, the Mediator's prayers prevail in heaven; *Him the Father beareth always*, &c. Satan often suggested to me that hellish temptation, the longer I continued a profession of religion, I would dishonour God the more. It was suddenly darted in upon my mind, as lightning into a room, and with that hellish force and vigour, as left little strength in me: my hands were ready to hang down, though I never omitted duty upon that account, so far as I can remember; but I was much discouraged in it. I often feared I would fall one day or other by the hand of the roaring lion of hell, and be a scandal to religion.—Satan made use of, as a bait for his temptations, the saying of the unjust judge to the widow, Luke xviii. 5. He moreover suggested, that by his continually persevering to tempt, he would weary me out at last. Indeed my standing was intirely owing to him *who hath all power in heaven and in earth*, and who can set the powers of heaven against the powers of hell: *We are more than conquerors through him that loved us*.

When I was sore wounded by Satan's fiery darts, then the merciful Samaritan poured in some sweet word of comfort; he bound up my wounds: he said unto me, *Fear not, I am thy exceeding great reward*, Gen. xv. 1. *Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, Eph. vi. 10. Notwithstanding, so far did those

unbelieving fears prevail, at times, to my shame I acknowledge it, and to the praise of the glory of his grace, *Who hath made us accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. i. 6. that I wished for a cottage in the wilderness, where no saint might know me, that if I fell, I should not *offend the generation of the righteous*. I consulted with myself, how to get off the name of religion: I remembered the common proverb, *Such company as ye are, such company take you to*. Then such insinuations as these came into my mind, I must leave the godly, and associate with the wicked; that I abhorred, for I could appeal to the searcher of hearts what a burden the company of the wicked had been to me, especially upon the Lord's day: and as for the saints, I counted them for *the excellent ones of the earth*; and favoured them most, when the image and Spirit of God most appeared in them. I have cause to speak it to the praise of God, I have found him pleased often to breath upon the company of saints, both in social worship and spiritual converse: *Those that feared the Lord, spoke often one to another; and the Lord hearkened, and heard it; and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name*, Mal. iii. 16.—In this divided day we leave in, I have often thought, it would have been more for the glory of God, and for the promoting of religion, if the saints had walked together more friendly in what they are agreed, than what they do: *Iron sharpeneth iron, so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend*, Prov. xxvii. 17. It will never be the privilege of the saints, to see eye to eye, in all that concerns the glory of God, in this imperfect state: yet they generally agree in the experimental knowledge of religion, tho' they differ far in the gifts and attainments that God is pleased to confer upon them. However, the least saint has a saving knowledge of a God in Christ; why then may not the saints converse together about what God hath done for their souls? *Follow peace with all men, and*

holiness; without which no man shall see the Lord, Heb. xii. 14.

I conversed with a godly minister, who had been much in the school of temptation. He told me, that he studied a whole week how he might throw off the name of religion. I was glad to hear of that; for I thought none had been in my case, though the apostle saith, *No temptation hath happened unto you, but such as are common to man.*

In the time of the late war Satan assaulted me much by that temptation, It is needless for you to write; for the French will come and destroy both you and your nation: *The fear of man causeth a snare*; that I found to my sad experience. Many things occurred to increase my fears: my own and the land's guiltiness; and the many awful tokens of the Lord's anger smoking against us, made me fear the Lord might justly make the French a rod in his hand, to punish us for our iniquities, and to avenge the quarrel of a broken covenant.—The Lord sent famine on the land of Israel three years, year after year, to avenge the quarrel of a breach of covenant with the Gibionites, 2 Sam. xxi. 1. To my great grief I conversed with one in the character of a minister, who ridiculed the covenants. I spoke to him to this purpose, "If the covenants bind us only to Bible principles, then we are bound by the law of God to perform them; though Scotland had never abjured, by covenant, every doctrine inconsistent with the word of God, and our Confessions of Faith." He replied, 'It would not be asked us at the day of judgment, whether we owned a covenanted work of reformation or not.' That scripture occurred to my mind, Matth. v. 19. *Whosoever therefore breaketh one of the least of these commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do, and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.* The noble marquis of Argyle, when upon the scaffold, expressed himself

thus; "God hath laid engagements upon Scotland: we are tied by covenant to religion and reformation, Those that were then unborn were engaged to it; and it passeth the power of any under heaven to absolve a man from the oath of God."

One time when I was much shaken by the forementioned temptation, I had left my writings lying in a window: that night there came on a great rain, which came down in the window. The first thing I saw in the morning, was the window in a flood of water: then I said with Job, *That which I greatly feared is come upon me*; for now I thought they were all ruined. When I came to the window, and saw the water had made no impression upon them, I was amazed at the condescendency of a God of power: he who preserved the three children, in the midst of the fiery furnace, preserved them in the midst of water. — It was all one to my view as if they had been taken out of a pool of water dry; and I saw no natural cause for it. O the astonishing condescendency of God, who vouchsafed to work, as it were, a miracle, to confound me for my unbelief. I was ashamed and confounded, when I remembered the words of the Lord which he had borne in upon my mind, in the hour of temptation; *But upon all the glory shall be a defence*, Isa. iv. 5. *This shall be written for the generations to come*, Psalm. cii. 18.

Again, the subtle enemy, who had many times tempted me to destroy myself, when it served his purpose, he turned it another way: he suggested that *much studying was a weariness to the flesh*, and by it I would destroy myself. I considered, that I had my being from God, my health from him, my all from him; and I desire to live upon him, and to live to him; and be disposed of by him, and for him, and by his grace: at this I desire to hold, *Thine am I, O David; and on thy side, thou son of Jesse*.

Lastly, Satan suggested, that there were so much self in what I had written, it were best to destroy it;

for if it came to the light, it would but dishonour God. While I was grieved at the thoughts of dishonouring God, those words were borne in upon me, *Thine adversaries shall be found liars; and, destroy it not, for a blessing is in it*, Isa. lxxv. 8.

When I view myself in the glass of the holy law of God, or in the glass of the holiness of God, who says, *Be ye holy, for I am holy*, O what cause have I to cry out, *Unclean, unclean!* I need a Saviour to save me from my best duties, as well as from my worst sins. It is a comfortable saying of Dr. Owen's, "The Lord
" Jesus takes away from the duties of the saints, the
" pride, the self, the unbelief; and perfumes them
" with the incense of his own merits, and presents
" them to his Father: and when they will meet the
" saints, at the day of judgment, they will scarce know
" them to be theirs."

Again, I observe, so far as I know, I neither allowed nor approved of self; so far as it prevailed, it was my burden and grief: when my sweet and altogether-lovely Lord was pleased to bring me into communion and fellowship with himself; then that detestable idol of self was ready to set up its head, and aspired to rob Christ of his crown, and all his royal prerogatives. Could I then be but grieved to see my glorious Lord robed of the glory of his grace? I loathed and abhorred myself on account of its prevailing; I cried to the Lord against it, saying, Let King Jesus reign; let him reign and wear the crown, and possess the throne in my heart for ever. I had not peace till that detestable idol, Self, was discernibly got under: I rejoiced sometimes in hope of the victory over it at last, when *those Egyptians, whom we see to day, we shall see no more again for ever*, Exod. xiv. 14.

SECT. IV. *Remarks upon the whole.*

I SHALL now conclude these reflections, by offering a few remarks upon the whole.

1. In all my trials and temptations, the sin of *unbelief* hath been the predominant evil. O how much have I dishonoured God, by not believing in his word, and not trusting in his salvation as I ought? My sin hath many heinous aggravations attending it, being committed after so many sweet manifestations of the love of God in Christ, and being convinced of it; again and again have I foolishly requitted the Lord, by razing the foundation, and calling in question his former loving kindneses; as if God had been changed in love, when I was changed in frame. O what cause have I to *look upon him whom I have pierced, and to mourn?*

2. In all my trials, my *comfort* came by the word of God. When he shot the arrows of conviction into my conscience, it was by his word; when he healed me, it was by his word: *The word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword; and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart,* Heb. iv. 12. When I got a discovery of the glory of God in Christ, by faith, it was through the glass of the promises; when I heard his voice, it was in his word: *Never man spoke like this man. He told me all things that ever I did; Is not this the Christ?* Here we may see darkly through the glass of the promise; but when the glass of the promise is removed, and faith swallowed up in vision, then the soul will get a sight of its glorious object, the beautiful vision of God and the Lamb. *Make haste, my Beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young hart, upon the mountains of Bether.*

3. The sweet *manifestations* of the love of God in Christ, and the *effects* that ordinarily attended them, had their own weight with me in the hour of temptation. I mention some of those effects.—They discovered new *wants*, and increased new *fears* of sinning against so loving and kind a Lord.—They discovered the want of *love* to God: I wondered I could love him so little, who loved wretched me, and *gave himself for me.*—

They discovered also much want of a holy reverential fear of God : holy fear in speaking to God, or speaking of him, or writting concerning him : *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints.*

4. I have observed, to my sweet experience, in the renewed manifestations of the glory of God in Christ, that I have got a brighter view of *one attribute* and *perfection* of God than of another : sometimes a bright view of the *truth* and *faithfulness* of God ; *I will praise thy name, for thy loving-kindness, and for thy truth,* Psalm cxxxviii. 2. Sometimes a brighter view of the *love* of God : *God is love ; and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him,* 1 John iv. 16. Sometimes a brighter view of the *glory* of God, shining in face of Jesus Christ : *And we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth,* John i. 14. Sometimes a sensible *smell* of his ointment : *Thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee. His mouth is most sweet ; yea, he is altogether lovely. O taste and see that the Lord is good ; blessed is the man that trusteth in him. That which we have seen and heard, declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us ; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ,* 1 John i. 3.

GREENOCK, }
March 10. 1767. }

MARION LAIRD.

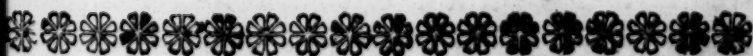
The END of the MEMOIRES.

Will^m Muirhead



A
C O L L E C T I O N
O F
Religious LETTERS.

WRITTEN BY
M A R I O N L A I R D.



T

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

THE following RELIGIOUS LETTERS, written by the AUTHOR of the preceding MEMOIRES, to several of her friends and acquaintances, breath forth much of the spirit and disposition of the truly pious and devout Christian.—They were wrote during the time of her last indisposition, which lasted more than thirteen years: and as they contain the genuine sentiments of an exercised soul; under the rod; so, it is hoped, they will be a valuable present, and a suitable cordial to those who are exercised to true godliness, especially to all such as may be either in outward distress of body, or inward perplexity of mind, or perhaps of both.

Though these with whom she corresponded, we understand, have been very careful in preserving her excellent Letters; yet, it would not have been in our power to have favoured the public with such a complete Collection of them, had not she herself carefully kept doubles of the most of them, regularly wrote in a book, and preserved with her Memoires.



RELIGIOUS LETTERS.

L E T T E R I.

TO MARGARET CLARK, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Sister in the Lord,

I WOULD discover to you, some hints for meditation. The first thing I would say to you is, If a believer's enjoyments come not up that length in degree that formerly he had, he is very ready to suspect them, as if they were all delusions. If he met with eminent enjoyments in his first closing with Christ, and cannot come up that length again, he calls all in question. Some think that communion with Christ consists in elevated soul-raptures and ravishment up to the third heavens; and if they find not this, they think they have no communion with Christ: whereas they may have much real communion with him, first by desires after him; secondly, by hoping in him; and lastly, by lifting up their hearts, and panting earnestly after him, which is real communion, tho' we pass it as no communion with Christ. Often times the most real and sensible enjoyments have the strongest assaults on the back of them. — I would only say this to you, fight, for the day of your complete victory is coming. No more at present, but rest your loving friend,

GREENOCK, }
May 7th, 1756. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R II.

TO MARGARET CLARK.

Dear and loving Comrade,

DEAR sister, I am glad to hear from you. In this short time since I saw you I am brought as low as you are; yet it may be you will get home to heaven before me. We should be like the loving wife, that longs and looks for the coming of her beloved husband. It is the character of believers, that they are such as *love his appearing*. O when shall the time of our pilgrimage, and the days of our banishment be finished, that we may get home to our Father's house, where we shall no more groan out our complaints! O that we could send our faith and hope, these two faithful spies, to survey the promised land. Dear sister, help me to love and praise the Lord Jesus. — I have heard no preachings since ye saw me: but Sabbath-days have been very sweet to me. I am not able to write any more to you. Your loving comrade,

GREENOCK, }
Oct. 7th, 1757. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R III.

TO JAMES GARDNER and MARGARET CLARK.

Dear and loving Friends,

I DESIRE greatly to hear from you. I am in a very weak condition in my body, and unable to write to you; yet, if I could advance God's glory and honour, by commending glorious Christ and his love to you, I have occasion to do it. O what think ye of the electing love of God? What think ye of the free-

dom of his grace? What think ye of the manifestations of his love to your soul and mine, who am so unworthy?—I think I have as wicked a heart as ever any of God's elect had; yet all this could not hold him away from my soul. O help me to praise him. O admire his love.—You complain of heart-plagues; and so may I. I think *self* is the greatest heart-plague I have. But let us employ the kingly power of our Lord Jesus Christ to subdue them.

Dear sister, you know when travellers, who have met with many storms, troubles, and dangers in their journies, rejoice when they come near to their own country: and should not you and I rejoice when sickness, and fore-runners of death tell us that the winter of our darkness and trials is passing, and the summer of eternal light and joys is at hand? No more at present, but rest your loving friend,

GREENOCK, }
Oct. 12. 1757. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R I V.

To Mr. ROBERT STEWART, in *Paisley*.

Dear and loving Cousin,

IT is long since I thought to have written to you, but wanted an opportunity. You may think it strange why the Lord keeps me so long in the furnace: I know he will keep me no longer in it, than he has glorified himself in the trial of faith and patience; and served the purposes of his own glory with me. Think not that our Lord is a hard master; he sends none a-warefare on their own charges: he giveth liberally, according to the state of such a King. Such have been the Lord's kindness to my soul, that I would rather be in the furnace with him, than in health without him.

Cousin, I can tell you from sweet experience, the faith of an interest in glorious Christ, is the best water to cool the fire of affliction: there is no matter how bitter the cup be, if the Lord gives courage to drink it; or how heavy the burden be, if the Lord gives strength to bear it. There is a reality in religion that supports the soul in the agonies of death, and amongst the hands of the great king of terrors; when all friends, yea, the greatest of saints, can do nothing but bear us company in the house of mourning. I intreat you, therefore, try and examine yourself, to see if you have gotten the company of the best friend, Christ Jesus: if you will not judge and try yourself now, there is a day coming, that God will do it for you: a dying day will try our religion to purpose. I intreat you, therefore, look ere you leap into eternity, without a testimony under Christ's hand. Enter into the court of conscience, and try what knowledge you have gotten of God, more than you have had some years ago. Our Lord has told us, that *except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven.* True conversion is *the strait gate and the narrow way*, and there be *few that find it.* Live not at an uncertainty about a matter of so great a concernment, as the salvation of your soul is, seeing the knowledge of an interest in Christ is attainable, and the knowledge of it is comfortable: without Christ we can neither live nor die comfortably. I have sometimes wondered to see any look with a glad countenance, that wanted an interest in Christ. If you have seen him, you have seen a glory in him that will darken all created glories to you. If he died for you, O live to him, and let the concerns of his glory be your concern in the world.—This may perhaps be the last advice from your loving cousin. We must all shortly appear before the judgment-seat of Christ. Rests your soul's well-wisher,

GREENOCK, }
 July 12. 1760. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R V.

TO JAMES GARDNER, in *Glasgow*.

JAMES, I have been often afraid, that you and others, would be discouraged at the length of my affliction. When I was in health myself, and heard of the distress of others, my heart was like to faint; but now I see it is the *joy of my Lord* that is my strength and support under affliction. Glory to him he has been my company in the furnace. O how familiar has he been with my soul! He hath condescended to keep converse with my soul, when I have been that low, by reason of trouble, that I could have been active for no other duty, but that of meditation. O how wonderful and astonishing is the condescendency of God to me, that he who is *the Father of Spirits* should converse with our spirits, as a man doth with his friends! O wonderful love to so hell-deserving a creature! O but the love of God and the enmity of my heart filleth me with wonder. I can do no more but wonder at his love. I long to be above, where I could join with the hundred forty and four thousand that are about the throne, singing praises to Jehovah and the Lamb, where I shall dishonour him no more; where I shall see him for myself, and be satisfied with his likeness. O how joyful is the shouts of the coming of the glorious Bridegroom to me! I think, through grace, I could pass through hell at the nearest, to be at the full enjoyment of my Lord, within the veil: yet, without him, I can do nothing. Altho' I never had the honour to suffer for him, he has told me, that *if I suffer with him, I shall also reign with him*; for he has said, *In all your afflictions I am afflicted*.

James, you may see what matter of a song of praise the Lord has given me in this my prison; he has given me ground to *shew forth his loving-kindness in the morning, and his faithfulness every night*. O what reason have

I to blifs his holy name? And I defire you to do it alfo. He makes me to trample over both the fear of death and of life. I think it is more difficult for me to live than to die, becaufe of the deceitfulnefs of my own heart. I am continually in danger of difhonouring the Lord.—I defire your fymphony, your minifter's, and others of your acquaintance at the throne of grace for me, that the Lord may enable me to glorify him in the fire, and bring me out of it to the praife of his own glory. I have been fometimes very bad fince I faw you; but I am a little better at the time. No more at prefent, but reft your loving friend, till death,

GREENOCK, }
Aug. 1ft, 1761. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R VI.

To fome of her *Relations*.

MY dear friends, I think it proper to leave you a few advices, when I am unable to fpeak to you. You know that I am often fo weak, by reafon of trouble, that I can neither fpeak to you, nor others: therefore hear this as God's voice to you; unlefs you hear it as coming from God to you, you will get no good of it.

My dear friends, my advice to you is, firft, O imitate our glorious Lord Jefus Chrift, who fought not his own, but his Father's glory. O feek his glory in the world in all things, as your chief end: there will be no fear of your good. Our Lord has told us, *Him that honoureth me, will I honour; and him that defpifeth me, fhall be lightly efteemed of me.*

Dear friends, my fecond advice to you is, to clofe with Chrift, as he is offered by God unto you: no duty can be acceptable to God, while we are out of Chrift. It is in Chrift that we and our duties are both acceptable to God. O then, get Chrift for your por-

tion. O Sirs, ye can neither live nor die comfortably without Christ. If ye have gotten any views of the glory of God in Christ, you have seen him to be a suitable Saviour for you. You have seen also your own emptiness of every thing that is good. O then, travel much between your own emptiness and the fulness that is in Christ. Make this your continual tread, while ye are absent from him. O study much the duty of meditation. This is a duty, in which, thro' the blessing of God, you may enjoy much of God's favour and friendship; yea, much communion and fellowship with him, when you are employed about your lawful business. Dwell much in your thoughts upon the love of Christ. —O with what holy confidence may ye converse with God in Christ; the glorious meeting-place where God and man meets together. Christ is our way to God and God's way to us. Glory to him for this way of access: it is the way, Sirs, that brings glory to God, and salvation to sinners.

Dear friends, acquaint yourselves with the Lord of the land that is above; that land of glory: the more acquaintance you have with him, ye will be the less afraid to go to him. I think it is one of the greatest reasons, why so many are afraid to meet with God at death, because of the great estrangement that is between God and their souls. O but it is good to draw near to God, and look for his coming to them: to them that look for him, he will appear, and his appearance to them will be joyful. *Blessed is that servant that is found watching when his Lord cometh.*

I know not well what to say to some of you: I fear you are yet in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity. If you get a duty performed, I am afraid you never questioned whether you met with Christ in the duty or not. O remember your chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever. You cannot live comfortably without him: seek his glory in the world. O do not spend your youth and your strength in ful-

filling the lusts of the flesh, lest when you come to old age, or a death-bed, and would fain have Christ, that God bid you *go to the gods whom you have served, and let them deliver you. I cried, and they would not hear; and it came to pass, when they cried I would not hear, saith the Lord of Hosts.* O then, flee speedily to Christ; study to get in under the covert of his blood and righteousness, there shall you live safely, and die securely. Take him for your guide through the wilderness; and say of him, *This is our God, and he will be our guide even unto death.* And that the Lord may enable you to say so, by the faith of his own operation, is the desire of your dying friend,

GREENOCK, }
Aug. 9th, 1761. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R VII.

To Mr. JAMES GARDNER, in Glasgow.

JAMES, I received your letter: I wish the Lord, who seeth in secret, may reward you your kindness to a prisoner.—You complain, I understand, of a wandering heart: I have reason to complain of that as well as you have. It is your duty and mine both to make much use of Christ, who is *made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and complete redemption.* Dwell much in your thoughts upon the love of Christ: the more you think upon him, the more glory and excellency you will see in him; the more you contemplate on him, by faith, you will see the more beauty in him.—James, I am sure the more beauty you see in glorious Christ, you will see the less beauty in time's things that your heart runs out after. I would earnestly recommend this duty of spiritual meditation to you. I know, that without Christ we can

do nothing: all duties are tasteless when Christ is not found in them. I think, through the Lord's blessing, I have found so much sweet communion and fellowship with a God in Christ, that I have often thought I would recommend it to others, as far as my word or write would go. In the exercise of this duty, you may enjoy much of God when you are employed about your lawful calling.

James, you see it hath pleased the Lord to single me out for long affliction. It is my desire also, that he would some how make me useful for his own glory in the world. Let that be your desire at a throne of grace also.—Upon Sabbath last I was very bad; but I am a little better these two days again. I long much for that blast that will blow me to the harbour of rest, where *the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest*.—I am very unable to speak unto you; the cords of affliction doth hold me so fast. I know that the Lord will keep me no longer in the furnace than he has glorified himself in the trial of faith and patience, and served the purposes of his own glory with me: he does all things well. Let me have your sympathy at the throne of grace, for grace to glorify God in the furnace. No more, but rest your loving friend, till death,

GREENOCK, }
Nov. 9th, 1761. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R VIII.

TO MRS. EASTON, in *Lillies-leaf*.

Dear and loving Sister,

I RECEIVED your letter, of which I was very glad. I intend a little more converse with you upon paper. I wish you and I may be enabled to imitate our glorious Lord Jesus, who *sought not his own*,

but his Father's glory. I think it is the hardest piece in religion to be denied to ourselves: this woful self aspires to robe our glorious King Jesus of his crown and royal prerogative; but let him wear the crown, in spite of enemies within and without us; and let him tread and trample upon us as seemeth him good, provided he glorifies himself.

I have been often sorry to hear of your afflictions; yet I was glad you viewed the hand of God in them. I much question if we can get good in any trial, till we see God's hand in it. Afflictions are the means God makes use of to squeeze the sap out of created enjoyments; yet, I am of opinion, that a view of our glorious Lord Jesus, in his beauty and matchless excellency, will more darken the beauty of time things, than any affliction.—If I could comfort you with these consolations wherewith the Lord has comforted my soul in my afflictions, I would gladly do it. He has sometimes comforted my soul with these words, *I will dwell in the midst of a poor and an afflicted people, and they shall trust in the name of the Lord.* O but these words have been sweet to my taste; for I am as poor in myself, as any possibly can be. O but a poor sinner and rich Saviour is well met. I think much of our life should be spent in travelling betwixt his fulness and our own emptiness: *It hath pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell.* Glory to him it is a communicative fulness; he giveth liberally according to the state of such a King. I am ashamed of my narrow thoughts of Christ and his love: I ought to have devised more liberally of Christ, and his liberality. I never conceived there was so much of Christ, and his sweet love to be found on this side heaven, as I have found in him within this half year. Our kind Lord doth not suspend all our joy till we come to the journey's end.

You desired my sympathy; and such as it is you have not wanted it, since the Lord was pleased, in his

adorable sovereignty, to reveal his purposes of love to me concerning your son. I long to see the promise accomplished concerning him: it is your duty and mine to plead for it, and to wait upon a promising God, who will, in due time, be a performing God. I desire of you to let me know what your son is doing, and to tell him to mind what I spoke to him. I desire to commit him to the glorious advocate with the Father, who is able to make him perfect. Dear sister, I desire you to help a divour to pay the debt of praise to our lovely, sweet Lord Jesus. — No more, but rests your loving friend, and soul's well-wisher,

GREENOCK, }
Dec. 31st, 1761. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R IX.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glasgow*.

SIR,

I AM afraid, in essaying to answer your request, that I but darken counsel with words without knowledge, to speak of our fair and lovely Prince Jesus, whose love far surpasses either my thoughts or words. His love sometimes filleth me with wonder, until I almost lose myself in this sweet ocean, where I can find neither brim nor bottom. There are three things in the love of Christ which has sometimes afforded me matter of meditation. There is the *strength* of his love: mountains of difficulties could not hinder it.—There is the *freeness* of his love; *He loves freely*.—There is also the *sweetness* of his love: *His love is better than life*. I have cause to speak it to his praise, if I could; he has been pleased to bring me into communion and fellowship with himself; and, by his word and Spirit, conversed with my spirit, as a man doth with his friend.

When he goes away again, he leaves such a want behind him, in my soul, that nothing can fill it up; and such a flame of desire, which makes me often to cry, O that time would flee away! O that eternity would usher in!

Sometimes upon the back of the foresaid exercise, when I get any sleep, I am sore terrified with dreams and apprehensions of the enemy, in invisible shapes, that it is owing to the power of God, that keeps me in my right judgment. At other times my heart is filled with such vile abominable thoughts, that one would think they could not be imagined, they are so vile: they fill me with self-abhorrence, in the sight of a holy God, and make me jealous of the love of God, whether it was himself I saw, or an idol I took for him. But if I be beguiled, it is a sweet beguile; I could go to death and the grave with it. When I enter into the court of conscience to examine myself, I think this enemy, subtle self, is more dishonouring than any of the rest: for it aspires to no less than to wear the crown and royal prerogative of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sir, you will please to remember me at a throne of grace; and plead that the Lord may take glory to himself out of me a prisoner, and enable me to drink the cup, he hath given me to drink, with patience and resignation to his holy will, which is always best for me. My faith and patience are both upon the trial; but *patience must have her perfect work*: I long much for the Bridegroom's coming: he sometimes sweetly appears in that word, *Lift up your heads, for the day of your redemption draweth nigh*. The thoughts of his coming revives my heart. O what will it be to be for ever with the Lord; when but a blink of him in his own word, is so exceeding sweet!—Sir, I desire you would help me to love and praise him: he is worthy of all our love. But I must break off for I am not able to speak. Sir, you will be so good as remember me to those you spoke of in your letter: and I desire you

would favour me with writting again. No more at present, but rest your friend,

GREENOCK, }
May 4th, 1763. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R X.

To Mrs. GLEN, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Sister, and companion in affliction,

I HAVE heard, by Mr. Gray, of the continuance of your trouble. You are not alone in your affliction; you have the sympathy of your glorious High-priest, in your trouble: and, *if you suffer with him, you shall also reign with him.* The more your sufferings are here, they will render you more conformable to your glorious Head, who was *a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.* My greatest difficulty is vain thoughts: they are sometimes suddenly darted in upon my mind, although no more welcome than fire into a house. I have been thinking upon that saying of the apostle's, *For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* I think it no wonder the apostle called death *gain*: it hath been ground of sweet meditation to me to think that death will be gain to me, and all others, who believe in Christ. Death will let us go to the full enjoyment of Jehovah and the Lamb; our light, our life, our joy; where we shall drink of the rivers of pleasures that run from beneath the throne of the Lamb: there clouds will no more cover from the face of our glorious Sun; no more fear of dishonouring him. The deceitfulness of my heart keeps me often in fear; but there love will be perfected, and cast out fear: *there we shall forget our poverty, and remember our misery no more: there God will be our everlasting light, and our God our glory.* The views of this fair and fragrant land of

glory makes me often cry out, Why tarries his chariot so long? Why is my Lord so long a-coming. There will be no more love-sickness, no more pain, for want of possession: there the soul will be filled with the sweet and lovely Jesus.

I wonder why ye do not write to me. I have found the Lord give much countenance to this duty; *while I mused, the fire burned*, and kindled in my soul a sweeter sense of his love than I could either speak or write: If ye cannot commend Christ from a sense of his love upon your soul; commend him for himself, his sweetness and beauty. That the consolations of the Holy Ghost may be multiplied unto you, is the desire of your sister,

GREENOCK, } • MARION LAIRD.
May 8th, 1763. }

P. S. I can make use of no spirits; the weakest of ale and tea is the most of my cordials. I am in a very weak condition, and unable to speak much, my stomach is so pained by it.

L E T T E R XI.

To Mrs. GLEN, in Glasgow.

Dear and loving Sister,

I AM sorry to hear of your complaints. You may take your own Lord's word for it, that where he has paid a visit, he will pay it again: he has said, *I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man shall take from you.* I am afraid you are setting the house of Saul against the house of David, in bearing false witness against the Spirit of God in your own soul; for which cause he sometimes leaves his own people to go mourning without the sun. O be aware of

wounding your Lord by your unbelief. Whatever be wrong with you, all is right with him; he comes and he goes sovereignly: but, within a little, your glorious Sun will arise, and dispel all clouds; and then *the days of your mourning shall be ended.*

You are desirous to know the nature of my trouble: but not to be tedious in writing, I sent you a little account of it with Mrs. Yeats. Let that suffice you, which has often sufficed me, it is of the Lord. I have been made to view my trouble this way: it is the trial of faith and patience. If the Lord shall assist, I will give some reasons for it.

The Lord did not bring this rod suddenly, nor unexpected; I had some impressions of a trial, now and then, three or four years before I took my trouble. The first thoughts of the trial arose from the manifestations of glorious Christ, being far above whatever I had experienced before, especially in public ordinances, and in the duty of meditation. Sabbath days were exceeding refreshful: the Lord enabled Mr. Cock to speak so to my case that I thought there was scarce any thought in my heart, through the week, but were laid open on the Sabbath. The garments of our glorious Bridegroom smelled of myrrh and cassia, in his own ordinances, whereby I was made glad, and longed much for time flying away, that I might get an eternal Sabbath in the enjoyment of my Lord within the veil. Sometimes in that duty of meditation, when employed about my lawful calling, it pleased our glorious Lord Jesus, to discover himself in his matchless beauty and glorious excellency: his glory darkened all created glories to me, being still more and more impressed with my trial. I often opened my mouth to the Lord to this purpose, If he would keep my interest in himself clear, and keep me about his own hand, and give me his presence, I resolved, in his strength, to be submissive to any trial he saw meet for his own glory. I thought that the faith of an interest in him, and the

enjoyment of his presence, would be a good support under any trial: and, I think, I have not been beguiled in this. I have often thought, he was an unworthy wretch, that would not desire to be content with glorious Christ, with the want of all things. I have reason to say to his praise he has granted me my request, in a great measure.

It never entered into my heart to think there were so much of Christ, and his sweet love, to be found this side of heaven, as I have experienced since my trouble began. Sometime before my trouble those scriptures had something of a constant impression upon my spirit; *Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel;* with these words, *Put off thine ornaments, that I may know what to do unto thee:* and also these, *The Lord, whom ye seek, will suddenly come; even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in.* From these words I sometimes thought, that it might be so, that my dissolution was near, which I greatly desired: for I thought then death was no more to me, but to throw myself into the arms of glorious Christ, and an eternal enjoyment of him. Notwithstanding of all this, after I was put into the furnace, and met with several disappointments, as the furnace trieth metals, and maketh the dross to appear, O what unmortified corruption did then appear? I found it then a hard matter to be content with the want of Christ; nothing less would satisfy me but the full enjoyment of him. I found it a hard thing to be denied to self, my will rose so up in rebellion against the will of God. I provoked him to pour in upon my soul such a sense of his wrath, that I thought all that could be indured, this side of time, was nothing in comparison of enduring the sense of that wrath of his displeasure for a few minutes; which brought to my mind a saying of Mr. Cock's, "That the Lord would not cast a believer into hell; but, for his sin he may cast a spark of hell into his soul."

It pleased the Lord to shorten that shock of his

wrath, and to make a new intimation of pardon, saying unto me, *I am pacified toward thee, for all that thou hast done.* For sometime I was set a wondering at the love of God in substituting his own Son in my law-room and stead, to bear that load of wrath, that the honourable egress of mercy, through him, might vent to me the chief of sinners. This was often my request to God, O that he would give me that heavenly wisdom to know the voice of the rod! O that he would shew me why he contended with me!—I was often afraid there was some sin unknown to myself, for which he contended. At one time it pleased the Lord to bear in these two texts of scripture, with power, upon my spirit, John ix. 3. 1 Peter i. 7. From these texts of scripture I saw the Lord's design was to manifest his own works, and the trial of faith and patience. At first view of this, viewing it to be a long rod, I said, O how will I win to the end of it? Whereupon it was immediately impressed on my mind, that our Lord sent none awarefare on his own charges; and he said unto me, *My grace shall be sufficient for thee, and my strength perfected in thy weakness.* I thought that was enough to get strength proportioned to the trial.—These are a few instances of the Lord's way with me. I wish he may bless to you what is his own, and pardon what is mine. I desire you would favour me with writting what is the ground of your discouragement. I should have wrote to Mr. Gray; but seeing I have wrote to you, I desire you would acquaint him of this.

I thought of writting no more at present; but, by advice of my writer leaving the line open, for a few days: on July 2d, as I was viewing yours, I saw two requests not spoke to. You ask me how I am supplied as to my body? I had some reluctancy to answer this; but these words came to my mind, *Him that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father also;* with a remarkable instance of the Lord's condescendency,

which you may take for an answer with many others. At one time, being in need for refreshment, I turned my eyes towards the Lord, in the faith of this, that he had the hearts of all men in his hand, and could turn them to supply a prisoner. While I was thus employed, the mercy came which I desired, which filled me with wonder at the condescendency of the Lord. While I was thus admiring the Lord's goodness, then these words came to my mind with much refreshing, *Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of those things before ye ask them.* That word, *my Father*, was the sweetest of it all. I thought, O what can they want that have him for their Father? Sure I am, they will want nothing that is for their good. In this the Lord was to me both the hearer of prayer and the answerer of it. Through the most part of the fore-mentioned day, the Lord was pleased to bring me near to himself, and filled my mouth with arguments. The matchless excellency, and glorious beauty that shined in the face of our glorious Emmanuel, ravished my soul, and pained my heart, through want of full possession.—There is in his blessed face a soul-captivating beauty.

As I am enabled I desire to sympathize with your heavy complaints before the throne; and also beg yours on my behalf: and that the Lord may recommend himself to you, is the desire of your sincere friend and acquaintance in our Emmanuel,

GREENOCK, }
June 30. 1763. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear Friend,

THE consolations of the Holy Ghost be multiplied unto you, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Sir, your letter, dated the second of June, was very refreshing to me; it brought to my mind an old experience of the Lord's loving-kindness to me: *He bringeth things new and old out of his treasures.* In the year 1742, when he first brought me from under the spirit of bondage, he made me, for some days, to walk in the light of his countenance, which was my light, my life, my joy, my strength. My soul was delighted with his beauty; and I began to think that I would never doubt of his love more. I thought my spiritual enemies were all dead: but whenever the clouds began to cover the face of my glorious Sun, then darkness and deadness prevailed; and I was afraid all was but the common operation of the Spirit. I feared that I had committed the unpardonable sin; whereby I was greatly distressed. Then the roaring lion of hell often suggested, it was best to put an end to my miserable life. One morning when I thought I was near the brink of despair, the Lord said unto me, *Fear not, I have the keys of hell and of death.* Glory, glory to him, that he never suffered me to be tempted above what he enabled me to bear.

Sir, your last letter was very seasonable to me. That season spoken of *giving glory to God by believing*, respected me in particular, when a cross providence seems to stand in the way of the accomplishment of the promise; it is a part of my exercise to wait for the accomplishment of the promise. At the beginning of my trouble, the Lord gave me a fair sight of the promised

land, by faith, which made my soul long to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God, and to drink of the river that runs from beneath the throne of God and of the Lamb. Oh ! how doth my soul long for the embracements of him ! *His love is better than wine : his mouth is most sweet ; yea, he is altogether lovely.* O that my soul were a throne where he might dwell for ever ; and my heart a temple for glorifying of him. Angels and saints, praise ye him.

Sir, what you say is your distressed case, I think it has been sometimes mine : I know it is very distressing ; and what made it very bitter to me was, it was upon the back of the sweetest manifestations and intimations of the love of God, which made me wonder at his love, and the enmity of my own heart : then I found that woful rival, pride, aspiring to wear my Lord's crown and royal prerogative, which distressed me sore for some time : I would often be made to cry, Let him reign ; let King Jesus wear the crown and the throne of my heart for ever : but ere ever I was aware, I found pride springing out of that exercise.—At other times, vile thoughts were darted into my heart, altho' they were no more welcome than fire-balls into a house ; which made me instantly cry unto the Lord, that he would keep my heart, and give me sin-subduing grace.—Thus I have been tossed like the locust, yet the wisdom of God is to be seen in all this, who has said, *Slay them, but not all, lest my people forget ; lest they forget their prayers, forget the promises ; lest they forget what he is to do for them.*

Dear Sir, the Lord has given you Christ to hate sin in yourself, and yourself for your sin ; this is some pledges of the victory : altho' *Gad a troop overcometh, he shall overcome at the last.* I am afraid of security. Godly Ruthertoord saith, " That a raging devil is better than a sleeping one." I had not such a refreshing time, since one of the days I was in meditation about writing to Mrs. Glen. In the morning it pleased the Lord

to give me a new meal upon an old visit. Through the whole of that day he allowed me near access to himself, as a man with his friend, except when I was interrupted by persons coming in. But about the evening he discovered more of his ravishing beauty, that shined in the face of our glorious Emmanuel; which glory overset my weak body for some time: I was neither able to move nor to speak. While it was so, these words were sweet ground of meditation, *When Christ shall appear, he shall change our vile bodies, and fashion them like unto his own glorious body.* The faith of this change, and the necessity I found of it, of its being made a spiritually strong and powerful body, to bear that weight of glory; were there but a little of it let out, it would soon overwhelm our created faculties. In the mean time I was a little afraid of a new trial, fearing the deceitfulness of my own heart, and the enemy without made me look to himself to keep me from sin. Let him do with me what seemeth him good. The same night I was sore distressed with trouble on my body, but enjoyed a sweet sense of his love upon my soul. It had some sweet impression on my soul till that day eight days.

Sir, I desire you to help me, a divour, to pay the debt of praise to so kind a Lord: request the Lord for me, that he may take glory to himself out of a prisoner. Favour me with writting again. Remember me to Mrs. Glen. No more at present, but rests your loving friend,

GREENOCK, }
Aug. 30. 1763. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XIII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear Friend,

I RECEIVED, Sir, what you sent alongſt with your ſon. I deſire to bleſs the Lord for your kindneſs to me, who am leſs than the leaſt of God's mercies. *What am I? what is my father's houſe,* that any ſhould take notice of me? I had ſome thoughts not to have wrote to you till you had written more particularly to me: but I am ſo indebted to the free and ſovereign grace of God, I have cauſe, if I could, to proclaim my Lord's praiſes, and to ſpend my ſhort bit of time to his glory. We are all on the wing for eternity; time is but a ſhadow. O the inconceivable joy of being with Jehovah and the Lamb! O the excellency of the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus, that is to be found this ſide of time. The Lord has been ſhaking this clay houſe near theſe ſix years, which ſpeaks forth its diſſolution: but he will build it again, and faſhion it like unto his glorious body. It has been brought very low ſince the laſt time I wrote to you; my trouble was ſo great I found a neceſſity of divine ſupport to bear it. The Lord, who has hitherto helped me, has brought to my mind this conſideration, that the rod was in the hand of a loving Father; and that there was no affliction in my cup, but what was for his own glory and my good. The trouble had ſome effects which it had not formerly, that did a little alarm me with the thoughts of preſent death, at which I was very glad; but I deſired to be all ſubmiſſion to the will of the Lord, whatever pleaſed him. Sometimes my will did ſweetly acquieſce in the will of God; but ere ever I was aware, I would have had my own will again, which kept me in a conflict. My

trouble rose to such a height, that beholders thought I had stepped into eternity. I did not know but it might have been so; in the meantime, I found a great sense of the Lord's absence, which put me to a little stand. If I have not misapplied his faithful word, he will give me a joyful passage into the land of glory. I committed my spirit to him who is able to keep it. For some time thereafter, I cannot tell you where my spirit was, whether it was up or down: after a little recovery, I heard one praying; and after prayer was over, he said, Amongst the many *all things* the Lord has done for you, he will make this work for your good also. I said, I am shipwrecked back again. O the astonishing condescendency of our Lord, who said unto me, *Let the Lord be glorified, and he will appear to your joy.* I thought it was as if he had said on the matter, Let me glorify my strength in your weakness; let me glorify my wisdom and truth, and I will appear to your joy. It is well.

Sir, it is not our Lord's kind way to give a fair sight of heaven and glory, and to break the heart with the want of it. Glory to him, the more he gives of the earnest of the inheritance, it doth not diminish the full possession. Sir, I desire to bless the Lord for his goodness to your soul: a sight of the fair and amiable countenance of our Lord Jesus will make glad in the saddest of times. Sir, the day is a-coming, when you will get another sight of all your trials. I think, if my strength would allow me, and it were not tedious to my writer, I would tell you from sweet experience, that the trials that were most cross to my nature, was best for me. I desire to bless the Lord, he did not give me my will; and his own wisdom has shined most bright in them to me, in ordering them for his own glory and my good: *The prosperity of fools destroys them.*

Sir, favour me with writting again as soon as possible. Send me word how Mrs. Glen is. Let me have your sympathy at the throne of grace. O help me to

love and to praise the Lord. I wonder I can love him so little: he is worthy of all our love. No more at present; but rests your loving friend,

GREENOCK, }
Oct. 11th, 1763. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XIV.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Friend,

ONE part of your letter was to me very glad tidings; the other part was very sad tidings: but, O what think ye of the wonderful condescendency of God, who made the saddest tidings in it, to have the sweetest effect to me. *Extoll the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.* Sir, I am afraid to speak what I intend to you, lest *I darken counsel by words without knowledge.* He who hath said, *I will be enquired of by the house of Israel,* he loves to have supplicants about his throne; and none are at a loss by having many errands there. He allowed me near access to himself in behalf of your daughter: I think the Lord hath said concerning her, *I have loved her with an everlasting love: I will cleanse the blood that hath not been yet cleansed.* It is for the honour of our glorious King Jesus to pass over a transgression. Behold what unparalleled love this is: if we would have a parallel to it, we must leave the earth and go to heaven. *As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you; continue ye in my love.* Sir, I once thought to conceal the Lord's loving-kindness from you, till those words were borne in upon me, *Comfort ye my people; go tell my disciples, and Peter: as if our Lord had said, Go tell my disciples, and poor broken-hearted Peter, I am rising indeed: it will be glad news to him.* In those words I

got a wonderful view of your kind Lord's sympathy with you in your trouble, which filled me for some time with wonder; whereupon I desired all the hosts of heaven to praise him, and my own soul also, though I know not how to perform such an exercise. — I remain your sincere friend,

GREENOCK, }
Dec. 15. 1763. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XV.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

WHAT induces me, Sir, at present to write to you, is the glory and honour of God, who hath done so great things for so vile a creature. O that ye may be excited to praise and thankfulness to him for his loving-kindness. I have been taking a view of the Lord's way with me through this wilderness journey: his ways with me has been very wonderful; for the most part of my life has been a life of troubles, either inward or outward. I desire to bless the Lord it has been so: when I thought he dealt hardest with me, I see now he was doing me most good.—Sir, I intend, if the Lord will, to remark unto you some of the acts of his loving-kindness. O that I could so record them, that God might get all the glory, and others be comforted. The first instance of his loving-kindness, so far as I remember, was in the year 1740. I was then so well pleased with my own condition, that I thought if there was three that would go to heaven, I would be one of them. I was induced, by the example of others, to perform duties, although from no higher principle than self, and to obtain salvation by the works of the law. In the foresaid year, it pleased the Lord

by his Spirit, on the first Sabbath of April, to set home, by the foolishness of preaching, the spirituality of the holy law; thereby *sin revived, and I died*. Then I began to consider, for what end I came into the world; and saw that it was to glorify God. I thought I had wholly lost that noble end. I saw I had spent my fourteen years without any view of the glory of God. I viewed myself just like a malefactor under the sentence of death, only I knew not the day of my execution. I thought there was nothing betwixt me and the bottomless pit, but the brittle thread of natural life, which could soon be cut asunder at God's command.

While I thus stood trembling at mount Sinai, condemned by God, and condemned by my own conscience, waiting for my sentence coming forth, it pleased the Lord to bring me to mount Zion, and to shew me the glory of his grace in Christ Jesus, and to fill my soul with joy, peace, and believing. O how sweet then was these words to my soul, *The law of the Spirit of life, that is in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death*.

So foolish was I, that I thought all difficulties had been over: I thought I would never doubt of the love of God any more; but, Oh! alas! whenever clouds began to cover the face of my glorious Sun, and my spiritual enemies began to rage, I concluded my last state to be worse than the first. Then the enemy began to assault me, that I had committed the unpardonable sin, whereby I was greatly distressed.—Again, the enemy suggested to me, that it was best to put an end to my miserable life; which temptation was of long continuance. This was in the latter end of the year 1741.: it continued now and then till the year 1757.

I never saw so much of the wisdom of God, the faithfulness and the power of God in any trial, as in this.—The *wisdom* of God shined in it, first in imbittering the pleasures of time by it. Youth is a season our corruptions have much need to be borne down:

this sent me many errands to the throne of grace.— His *faithfulness* shined also in it, in not suffering me to be tempted above what he made me able to bear.— His *power* also in upholding me: *when my foot was near to slip, his mercy held me up.* The enemy made often use of the saying of the unjust judge to the woman, *I will avenge her of her adversaries, lest by her continual coming she weary me.* The enemy often said, by his continual tempting, he would weary me out at last; and the longer I continued a professor of religion, I would dishonour God the more. This made me say sometimes, Woes me that ever I was a professor of religion; for it was the fear of dishonouring God, and the fear of wounding the spirits of his people, that had weight with me when no other thing had it.

One time when I was in this distress, it pleased God to lay open to me our Lord's temptations, where he was tempted to deny his Sonship, to self-murder, and to devil-worship; with these words, *If these things were done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry; with, Consider him least ye be weary and faint in your minds.* O how sweet a view was this to me! that I had a tempted Lord to come unto, who knows well *how to succour them that are tempted.* When the enemy came to our Lord he found none of his stuff in him; but there is much of it in me, which made me fear. I must observe to the praise of the Lord, in this distress I had often near access to God in prayer: but the enemy had almost frightened me from the place where I sometimes used to go to that duty.

One Sabbath-day I was much deserted: Mr. Cock had this observation in his sermon, "For the sins of God's people great estrangement took place between him and their souls: they become as strangers one with another." This was a weighty saying to me; for I found a great sense of absence, and feared it might be of long continuance. I thought, through grace, I would rather have any trial with Christ, than

a world without him : but ere I was aware, the Lord surprized me with a love-visit. I came home from his ordinance rejoicing, and went to the place I was afraid to go to before, to offer to the Lord the sacrifice of thanksgiving. It pleased the Lord, in his wonderful love and condescendency, to double the vision of his glory which I saw before in his own ordinance : he allowed me much communion and fellowship with himself. I saw so much of the Lord in that place, that I would not have been afraid of a hell of devils. In that part I saw the Lord to be more of might by far than legions of them.

Sometimes the Lord warned me by his word of this trial : at other times I was attacked by the enemy, upon the back of the nearest communion with the Lord, when I had no thought of him. I got this uneasy thorn to keep me humble and watchful.—Let those things excite you to praise and thankfulness to the Lord, who hath made my soul to escape as a bird from the snare of the fowler.—Remember me to Mrs. Glen, and other friends. I rest your friend in Christ,

GREENOCK, }
Jan. 7th, 1764. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XVI.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

I WAS much afraid, Sir, after I wrote to you last, that it had been miscarried, and would have exposed religion to contempt : but the glorious hearer of prayer supported me with these words, *Upon all the glory there shall be a defence : it shall return to your joy.*—When I received yours in March, I had lately met with an outward trial : when I opened it, and looked upon

some texts of scripture, they were very refreshing to me through the Lord's blessing. I saw a sweet harmony between the promise and the providence of God. I thought if it had come half a day sooner it would not have been so refreshing. I saw also the longer it was before a promise was accomplished, the more the wisdom of God shined in the accomplishment of it: and from it I was made to infer, that all the delays I had met with in my longed-for outgate, the wisdom of God, and the glory of God, would appear more in it.

I was telling you in my last, that I had been led to take a view of the Lord's way with me through this wilderness journey. I saw the trials that had been most cross to my nature to be well ordered. I desire to bless the Lord, I got not my own will.—Upon the back of this view, the Lord is calling me to this exercise, to record his loving-kindness, and to cause his name to be remembered. But there appeared many difficulties in the way. First, my own ignorance, who am so ignorant, and as a beast before him. Secondly, I had a great aversion to discover the secrets that had been betwixt God and my own soul to any other. But I must say, to the praise of God, he brought me back to himself, with every piece of this work, and answered all my objections from his own word. As to the first, he answered, *If any man lake wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth librally. He that hath wrought you for the self same thing is God.* My second objection was answered from these words, *Him that is asbamed of me before men, of him will I be asbamed before my Father and his angels.* Notwithstanding all this, I found a great aversion in my mind to that exercise: then that word came, *Be not disobedient to the heavenly vision. Shall his love be told in the grave; or his faithfulness in death?*—I fell a consulting with myself, if I might not delay it for some time, and wait to see if the Lord would give some ability to write myself; and with that I went to the Lord also: but this petition was partly

against my own light; for I think the Lord saith to me by his word, *The day of your redemption draweth near; if it were not so, I would have told you:* but while I asked, these words came, *Neither tempt ye him, as some of them tempted;* with these, *When they believed not his word, he gave them up to wander in counsels of their own.* At this my soul was set a trembling, and I durst speak no more of that matter. Then it came to my mind, that the Lord sendeth none awarfare on their own charges, and I was made to plead with him, who knoweth the hearts of all men, that he would provide an instrument that would be most for his own glory. O the astonishing condescendency of God; while I asked, these words came with a sweet heart-melting and humbling power along with it, *Grant thee according to thine hearts wish, and fulfill all thy counsels.*

For some days together, I was so racked between two extremes, with pride and self on the one hand, and difficulties on the other: I was often constrained to go to God with these petitions, O for more conformity to God! O for a greater measure of the Holy Spirit, that he would clothe me with humility as with a garment, and with zeal for his own glory as with a cloke. I got near access to God in asking these things; and these words ran with me, *Our heavenly Father giveth the Holy Spirit to them that ask it of him.* Now, my great difficulty was, I could remember nothing of by-past experiences; it was to me altogether impossible, without the Spirit: but while I was much perplexed, it pleased the Lord, in his adorable sovereignty, to bring to my remembrance former experiences with a brighter display of his glory, and revelation of the will of God, than I had at first. O this wonderful condescendency of God, it filled my soul with wonder and a sweet sense of his love, so that my soul was made to cry to him, O for an opportunity to record thy loving kindness. Then he answered me with that word, *I*

will and ye shall.—O what of God I saw in that word! I cannot tell you of it; come and see, or come and taste will best declare.

Sir, I desire the help of your prayers, Mr. Calier's, Mrs. Glen's, and other friends to the Lord, for direction concerning what is before-mentioned. I rest your sincere friend,

GREENOCK, }
June 18. 1764. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XVII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus Christ,

I RECEIVED yours, Sir, dated the 5th of May. I desire to bless the Lord for his loving-kindness to you, in your short affliction. When a faith's view of our Lord's drinking the bitter waters of the curse of a broken law, and the wrath of an offended God, maketh the bitter waters of Marah so sweet, O what will the wine in paradise be!—Well may it be said of the purchased redemption, applied by the Spirit, that it is like the salt that Elisha cast into the water-springs, it healed the waters and the barren ground; it healeth the soul of spiritual deadness and spiritual barrenness. Many a time when I have been beginning to sink under my trouble, he enabled me to look to himself, and I was lightened: if he had not made me sensible of my own weakness I had forgotten where my strength lay.

Sir, what I intend at present, is to remark unto you, if the Lord will, something of his loving-kindness since I wrote unto you last. You may compare the last two letters and this together, and then you will have a short view of this year's exercise. Upon the back of the sweet view of the former experiences, I spoke of

in the last, I was sore distressed with bodily trouble; I thought my trouble was so great I could not subsist under it. — Then a terror of death seized me, that every moment my breath would go out, and then where was the performance of these things, *viz.* what I spoke of in the last. Notwithstanding my sin and folly, in so foolishly requitting the Lord, in overlooking both his power and his faithfulness, the Lord bore in these words with composed submission, *Fear not, only believe; ye shall not taste death till all be fulfilled.* After this I was made to look over all difficulties that appeared in the way, both inward and outward; and he enabled me to plead with himself for the accomplishment of his own word: and I must say to his praise, he allowed me much nearness to himself in pleading with him; and he said unto me, *As a prince hast thou had power with God, and prevailed.* He gives of his own to serve him with; without him I can do nothing.

O, Sir, but this has been a remarkable summer: few days in it but I have had some blinks of his reconciled countenance, and some sweet word from his learned tongue. O help me to love and to praise him.—In the beginning of August last, it pleased the Lord to open the treasures of joy and pleasure that are at his right hand, in a very large manner, for two days together. The first day I got a very sweet view of the oneness betwixt the Father and the Son, and believers in him; *I in you, and you in me,* John xx. 17. *I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; unto my God, and your God.* O what wonderful sights I beheld of the Father in Christ! The wisdom of the Father is to be seen in him; the power of the Father is to be seen in him, in upholding him in the great undertaking; the counsels of the Father are to be seen in him, *The counsel of peace was between them both,* and are made manifest to us in Christ: but I must not insist.—On the second day, in the morning, I got a large view of that store of joy that is at the right hand of God: I

thought I could hold nothing of it, my vents are so narrow; but a little of that new wine of consolation, in comparison of what God hath to give, would overwhelm our created faculties. O to be made like him! O to see him as he is! O what could I do, but wonder at his love, and sometimes invite angels and saints to praise him! sun, moon, and stars to praise him; praise him dragons and every deep; praise him, O my soul!

At this time the Lord gave me ground to hope from his word that he would give me a triumphant death: *Prove me herewith, saith the Lord of Hosts; if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour down a blessing till there be not room enough to receive it.* It ran in my mind, that this was either a presage of my departure, or of some new trial; but soon, was what I feared most: for many a slip my deceitful heart has given me, upon the back of near communion with God. My soul looketh out joyfully for the Bridegroom's coming, when I will get on the fair white rob of the Redeemer's righteousness, and get a palm of victory in my hand, and a crown of unfading glory upon my head, *When the chief Shepherd shall appear.* I was very distressed thro' the night; and those words ran in my mind, *It is my desire that Job be tried to the end. In the world you shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace.* The sweet taste I had gotten of that peace made me to say of it, as David said of Goliath's sword, *Give me it, for there is none like it.* I was made also often to say, Lord keep me from sin, and glorify thyself in me; and do with me as seemeth thee good.

Sir, I spoke of a night in my letter, dated Jan. 7th, I thought I would not have been afraid of a hell of devils: I thought the Lord spoke something that night concerning this year's exercise; but I could never see how he would accomplish his word, till this year.—

Now, he hath made me to say of him, *Lo now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no parable.*

Now, Sir, concerning the exercise I spoke to you about, that the Lord was calling me to; so far as I see, it is near accomplished. Now it is the language of my soul, with old Simeon, *Let thy prisoner depart in peace, according to thy word; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.* I have seen much of the Lord's countenance about this exercise: for he answered all my difficulties about it, from his own word; and now he hath done as he hath said, and made me to say, *True and faithful are thy words, O thou king of saints.*

On the Sabbath morning I was more than ordinary enlarged in prayer; and that word came with a very heart-melting power, *What would ye that I should do unto you?* I was made to put it back into the Lord's hand to teach me what to ask; for truly I knew not: immediately the church's case was represented to me both in her national and personal apostacy from God. Time and strength will not allow me to mention particulars: only these few that I see daily prevailing. O what matter of grief is it to see the conformity of professors to the world, and the want of zeal for God's glory! I think our Lord has a controversy with this people for entertaining heart-idols: he complains that he is wounded in the house of his friends. It is matter of grief also, to see some professors who have lost the favour of religion they sometime had. I got leave to weep over these abominations before the Lord, and to plead for his return with days of power to his own ordinances. O but I got a sweet view of him in these words, *I will get me to the mountains of myrrh, and to the hills of frankincense, until the day break and the shadows flee away.* I thought this respected his presence in the ordinance; his presence in the ordinances makes them *smell as a field that the Lord hath blessed.* I was made to hope that the Lord will preserve a remnant

in poor backsliding Scotland, although, at some times, there should be but a few names in it.

I know not, Sir, but this may be the last time that I will write to you. O help me to love and praise the Lord for his truth, and the kindness of his love. Remember me to all friends in Christ: tell them both to pray and praise for me, my sweet and altogether-lovely Lord. Rests your friend,

GREENOCK, } MARION LAIRD.
Oct. 23. 1764. }

P. S. Let me have your return as soon as possible.

L E T T E R XVIII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

IF I could commend my sweet and altogether-lovely Lord, and his way with me, to you, I have cause to do it; but without him I can do nothing. I think there is a revenue of praise and honour due to him, from me above all others. His wisdom shineth in all his works and ways, were our eyes open to behold it. Well might we say, *Who is a God like unto thee? Thou art glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders.*

A few days after I wrote you last, it pleased the Lord, in his free love and adorable sovereignty, one morning to give me a glorious manifestation of his love, and communication of his mind, in those words, *Fear not to go down unto Egypt, I will go down with thee: and I will surely bring thee up again: he carefully keepeth his bones: with, Though after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.* I got a pleasant view of death and judgment, which made my soul cheerfully acquiesce in the will of God, to go down

to the grave in the faith of his going down with me ; and in the faith of his bringing me up, and changing this vile body, and fashioning it like unto his glorious body. By those words in Job, it was brought to my mind, that remarkable appearance, and glorious deliverance the Lord wrought for my soul in the year 1741. Oh ! how terrible was death to me then ! I could no more believe than I could create a world. I saw the holy law pursuing me for the debt of perfect obedience, and no safety from divine wrath, nor rest to the sole of my foot in all the creation. Death appeared to be at the door, and hell following at the back of death ; for, at that time, I was in a fever. My soul trembled to look out at the windows of the clay house. As a divine once said, ‘ The soul of the wicked ‘ was like a rusty sword, sweir to draw out of its ‘ sheath.’—In this great extremity, glory to God, he bare in, by an irresistible power upon my spirit, Job xix. 25, 26, 27. wherein I got a ravishing sight of the living Redeemer, and God pacified in him, and well-pleased for his righteousness sake. O that I could give thanks to him, at the remembrance of his holiness, who delivered my soul from going down to the pit, and my life from destruction.—But I return again to where I was.

Blessed be God, he strengthened me for the trial before it came. About twelve o’clock the fore-mentioned day, he veiled his glory again, and withdrew the sweet sense of his love : immediately my trouble increased to such a height, I thought it threatened a present dissolution, and was often so for six weeks time. I had indeed few blinks of his glorious countenance all that time ; blessed be his holy name he enabled me to rest on his faithful word, without any fear of death, or any jealousy of his love. When my sweet and altogether-lovely Lord withdrew, he left behind him, in my soul, a vehement desire for the enjoyment of himself, which swallowed up all fear of the Jordan of death,

which runneth in the way.—Well may the apostle call death *gain*. O what think ye of the beautiful vision of Jehovah and the Lamb! what think ye of conformity to God? what think ye of freedom from sin, and the inbeing of it? O unspeakable gain!

When I received your letter, dated Nov. 7th, I was astonished at the glorious condescendence of God to you and me both; for it exactly corresponded with my present exercise, as if ye had been a witness to it: *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will manifest to them his holy covenant.* When I received the other, dated Nov. 24th, it added to my former affliction, till it pleased our glorious and kind Lord to allow me some intercourse with himself on your behalf: and these scriptures were sweetly represented unto me, *All things shall work together for good to them that love God, and who are the called according to his purpose.* And, *I have seen his affliction, and I have heard his groanings; I have put his tears into my bottle. And against all griefs he sendeth forth comfort. And the Lord is known by his judgments.*—In those words I got a sweet view of the Lord's love and sympathy with you in your trial, and thereby the load was lifted off my spirit concerning your trial: for, it was like to be too heavy for me. I would ask you what of the Lord you have seen in that judgment?

About the end of the six weeks, formerly mentioned, I have ground to acknowledge, to the praise of the Lord, he again brought me unto the chambers of his presence, and allowed me new manifestations of his love, and some new intimations of his mind from these scriptures; *I know the thoughts that I think towards you, are thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end.* O wonderful love, to have the thoughts of God's heart made manifest to us in Christ! And also that other word, *Will I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth?* The womb of the promise may be long big with God's purposes; but it will not mis-

carry : *I will cause to bring forth, saith the Lord.* And the Lord shewed me from Heb. x. 36. that there was something of his will to fill up with me in this world yet ; and when the will of God was done, I should *receive the promise.* — O that these things may excite you to love and praise him, who is *fairer than the sons of men.*

Let me have your sympathy, and other friends, at the throne of grace. Plead with the glorious hearer of prayer, that he may not let me ly idle in his house ; but that he may take glory to himself out of a poor empty nothing. Rests your sister in the Lord,

GREENOCK, }
Jan. 27. 1765. }

MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I have reason to be thankful that I have received as much strength as to take a drink with my own hand, which I think no small mercy. I desire to know how it was that the watchman wounded you.—Your daughter has been often borne in on my mind ; and I have had liberty on her behalf at the throne of grace. I desire you would favour me with writing again. Let Mrs. Glen, and Jean Ramsay, and other friends know how I am.

L E T T E R XIX.

To Mrs. GLEN, in *Glasgow.*

Dear and loving Sister, and beloved of our Lord Jesus,
THE last line I wrote to you, I had some thoughts it would have been the last. We need not be afraid we will lose any thing by waiting upon our Lord's time. He comes into his garden to gather his lillies as soon as they are full ripened for glory. Pa-

tience must have her perfect work, that *we may be perfect, entire, wanting nothing*, James i. 4.

The last week was a very sore week of trouble to me: I saw an absolute need of divine strength to support and carry up under it. On the Sabbath morning I got a sweet view of these words, 2 Cor. iv. 17. *Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and an eternal weight of glory.* Three things in these words were ground of sweet meditation to me. The *lightness* of our affliction: 1. They are light in comparison of what we deserve, or what the damned in hell doth endure. 2. They are light, compare them with what our blessed Lord suffered in our room and stead; *He suffered, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God*: and by virtue of his sufferings the course is taken out of all our afflictions. 3. They are light afflictions; and so they are compared to a *moment*, which is the shortest division of time. What is our life but a moment, in comparison with vast eternity. As Mr. Dodwell saith, "What can be great to him, that counts the world *nothing*; or long to him, that counts the life of man *but a span*?"

Dear Sister, I was sorry to look upon your last letter, because of your condition: in it you have several complaints.

1. Ye say, "My soul is in a fainting condition, for *want of his presence.*" If our Lord had not first loved you, ye could not have loved and longed for him again. *The Lord will surely satisfy the longing soul; he will fill the hungry soul with his goodness.* It may be the Lord will feed your faith, but not your sense: the Lord's people would have sometimes a feast of his love, when he sees a feast of godly sorrow better for them.

2. Ye say, "I fear my state is not right." A believer's state is set right in justification, and sin can never put it wrong again. But, whatever be wrong

with you, rejoice that all is right with your glorious head and husband, the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. Ye say, "When I cry, he shutteth out my cry, and I cannot cry." Ye should beware of drawing harsh conclusions of your Lord's conduct towards you: he may hear your cry, though it be not speedily answered; if he strengthen you with strength in your soul, and keep you about his throne, I think ye have no reason to conclude that he doth not hear your cry.

Mr. Hutchison saith, "When our petitions are not answered, we should look there be not some unpented of guilt standing in the way; or, it may be, they have an habitual, carnal, ill frame, that the Lord would have rectified by keeping the supplicant at his bar: the prayer of faith he will answer in his own time." It may be the Lord was trying you, if you would go to another door. Sometimes when I could not get liberty in prayer, my own heart has condemned my selfish disposition in prayer, because I was not more concerned for the church of God, and for the good of particular persons with whom I was acquainted. Sometimes the Lord has been pleased to lay a concern upon my spirit for the church, and for some particular persons; and then I got something for them, and a feast for my own soul.

4. Ye say, that "You see no outgate from the calamity that is on your body in time."—Dear Sister, in these words ye preach forth my sin as well as your own; too often have I consulted with carnal reason and unbelief: the language thereof is, that there is no more view of an outgate from your trouble, than was the first day of it. I never tried that way of reasoning, but I was like to lose my feet, and land myself in confusion. Discontentment is a bitter ingredient we put into our own cup. And when I examined into the grounds of it, I found much pride and self at the bottom of it. O proud, sinful dust, that will not submit to the will of God. *Self* is both a *deceiver* and a *robber*;

per; it robs Christ of his glory, and it aspires to nothing less than his crown and royal prerogatives. O to be truly humbled! it is of the Lord's mercies that I am not consumed, who am less than the least of his mercies.—Dear Sister, by waiting on God, and exercising faith, patience, and submission to his will, ye may see an outgate, although not a deliverance. O that we were helped to Abraham's way of it; he considered not the difficulty that was in the way of the accomplishment of the promise, but was *strong in the faith, giving glory to God*.

5. "Ye fear his judgment will be lengthened out." Such is our folly, we think of a great while to come, and so make apprehended future events a present distress. Were we more frequent in our converse with eternity, it would make our afflictions appear but short, which worketh glory for us, an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. If our sufferings be a *filling up of the sufferings of Christ in the flesh*, Col. i. 24.; and we made more conformed to our glorious head, who *first suffered, and then entered into his glory*: we have reason to rejoice in all our afflictions. I am persuaded, that a sight of the fair face of our Redeemer in heaven, in his ravishing beauty and glorious excellencies, and all the divine perfections of God shining brightly in his glorious person, will more than make amends for all our afflictions. I have reason to bless the Lord, that I have wearied less this seventh year of my affliction, than I did the first year. I find idleset no small cause of wearying. It pleased the Lord to call me to such duties, as thereby he gave me many errands to his throne of grace; for I needed all my furniture from himself. Sometimes a battle with *sickness* and *pain*, and thereby needed a constant depending upon the Lord for strength to bear it, with patience and submission to his holy will: and I am glad divine strength is engaged to uphold me; for, saith he, *Fear not, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee by the right-hand*

of my righteousness. Sometimes I have a battle with a troop of vain thoughts, which is worst of all; and I can get no victory over them, till he whom the winds and sea obey, come into my soul, by the divine influence of his holy Spirit; then the raging waves of corruption, that raged before, are quiet and still.—O it is good to be with God, though it were in a hot furnace.

Dear Sister, wait upon the Lord, in the way of his judgments; *Be of good courage, and he will strengthen your heart.* That the Lord may enable you to wait, is the desire of your sister in the Lord,

GREENOCK, }
Feb. 28th, 1763. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XX.

TO JAMES WILSON, *my Brother-in-law.*

Dear and loving Brother and Sister,

I LONG to know if your souls be growing in conformity to God; *The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more until the perfect day.* We read Genesis iii. 9. that *the Lord God called unto Adam, and said, Adam, Where art thou?* The Lord doth not need that any should inform him of man, for he hath a perfect knowledge of things past, present, and to come. I take the import of the question to be,
1. The Lord would have Adam to *bethink himself* of his self-destroying condition, and of his utter inability to help his condition. All access to heaven, by the covenant of works, was shut against him; and a flaming sword placed to keep him from the tree of life.
2. I think also the question imports, Adam's *absolute need* of a Saviour and Redeemer, which was immediately revealed to him in the first promise, *The seed of*

the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. Put the above question to your own souls, which the Lord put to Adam, Gen. iii. 9. pose your own souls as in the sight of God and your own conscience, what state your souls are in, whether in a state of nature, or in a state of grace: if ye are in Christ, ye have once seen yourselves to have been without him, and to have been under the wrath and curse of God. *He that believeth not, is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him,* John iii. 18, 36. Blind proud man, deceived by Satan, thinks he hath a goodness in heart and in life, which renders him worthy of divine mercy and favour, which he dares to plead, before God, as the Pharisee did; *I thank thee I am not as other men.* But when the Lord is about to apply salvation to an elect soul, he empties it of its own righteousness, and shews it its ill-deserts, hell-deservings, and miseries; and also reveals the remedy, in order to make it willing to be saved in the Lord's way; the way of faith is possessed and enjoyed, and is a living out of ourselves, upon the Christ of God, upon his infinite fulness and fitness to save sinners, from the deepest misery to the highest glory.

Dear Brother and Sister, rest not upon a profession of religion, nor the performance of duties; these will not profit you in the hour of death: to have a name to live, and to want the thing signified by the name, is blasphemy; *I know the blasphemy of them that say they are Jews, and are not,* Rev. ii. 9.

Dear Sister, ye have need to look what fruits have followed your rod: there is a rod spoken of, Ezek. vii. 11. it made my soul tremble to think of it: *The rod blossomed*; but what fruit followed the blossoms? wickedness, pride, and violence; awful fruits! Our Lord saith, *I am like a greenfirr-tree, from me is thy fruit found,* Hosea xii. 8. Christless sinners can bring forth no fruit acceptable to God: it followeth not from a right principle, viz. from love to God; neither have they a right end in view, viz. the glory of God.—

They want Christ's image and superscription ~~on~~ them; and so will not pass in the court of heaven. See how small account the Lord makes of the duties of the wicked, Isa. lxvi. 3. It is the sweet-smelling savour of the sacrifice of the slain Lamb of God that perfumes our persons, our graces, our duties, and makes them ascend with acceptance before the throne. Have ye ever seen the transcendent glory and beauty of our Lord Jesus? If ye have, the sight would humble you to the dust. A sight of Christ is a humbling sight; for both the majesty of God, and the mercy of God, is seen in Christ.

That the Lord may manifest himself to you, otherwise than he does to the world, is the desire of your well-wisher,

GREENOCK, }
April 1st, 1763. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XXI.

TO JAMES MITCHELL, *a Christian acquaintance.*

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

IT is long since I had a thought of writing to you. I am often indisposed for any outward duty, by reason of my trouble. I live in a crazy tabernacle, which I often think is near its dissolution; and I am heartily content that it should be dissolved, seeing our Lord Jesus hath said, *All that the Father hath given me, I have lost none: and I will raise them up at the last day.*

Dear Brother, I desire you would write me what hath been the issue of the exercise my sister was under: the trees may blossom fairly in the spring, on which there may be no fruit in the harvest. Some have sharp soul-exercise, that are nothing but fore-tastes of hell. I have known some, within these few years, that have

had sharp convictions, but they are gone off again; they are as profane, and as careless about their salvation as ever; *whose last state seems worse than the first*, Matth. xii. 45. I have been astonished what to think of these dispensations; only this I am persuaded of, if they be elect vessels, they will get another awakening. I remember, about 24 or 26 years ago; about that time, I say, the Lord blessed his own ordinances with convincing and converting power; to which, I suppose, ye was a witness as well as I: and, by the divine influence of the Holy Spirit, barren souls became a fruitful field, and made to blossom as the rose. The garments of our glorious King Jesus then smelled of myrrh, aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby we were made glad: the King was held in the galleries of his own ordinances, which made them to smell as a field which the Lord hath blessed. I was a witness to some that were shining lights, while they were in the Church militant, and they got a fair gale of the wind of the Spirit to blow them into the harbour of glory, who dated their conversion from that time: but alas! we have sinned the Lord away from his ordinances, in a great measure. I am often grieved to see the little impress of God that is upon the spirits of professors, when they come from ordinances: their carnal speech, and the shew of their countenances, declare they have not been with Jesus.—But I insist not on these things.

Dear Brother, I would observe unto you, another remarkable step of the adorable condescendence, and free love of our God, on the last Saturday of March: my sister had a child that died; it pleased the glorious hearer of prayer, to impress my mind with a concern for the child, and bear in on my spirit, Mal. iii. 7. *I will spare him as a man spareth his own son that serveth him*: yet I was in the dark to know what was the mind of the Spirit of God concerning these words; only I got liberty in pleading that the Lord would spare him from

the curse of a broken law ; that his hand might be upon the man of his right-hand ; and that he would glorify himself in the child's salvation : the child was in great distress, which sometimes was like to pierce my heart ; and these words often supported me, *This is all the fruit of the rod to take away sin*, which filled my mouth often with new arguments ; that by the Lord's blessing that might be the effect of the rod, to take away sin. About an hour before his death, I got a glorious discovery of the love of God to him in these words, *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him*, Psalm xci. 14. I got a wonderful view of that love of God, the first cause, and of its honourable egress through the Lord Jesus Christ. But a sudden objection was darted into my mind, what if all this be a delusion : but behold the condescendence of our kind Lord, who sweetly reprov'd me for my unbelief, and made my heart to melt before the fire of his love, from Deut. xxxii. 6. John xiv. 9. Think on the works the Lord hath done, which breed admiration. Rests your Sister,

GREENOCK, }
May 13. 1765. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XXII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

I RECEIVED yours, dated April 6th, for which I desire to bless the Lord for the accomplishment of his true and faithful word, and for the sanctified use of your trial : *The Lord hath been mindful of his grace and truth to the house of Israel*.—I had not an opportunity to write to you any sooner. If my wicked heart do not deceive me, the love of God doth constrain me

to make mention of his loving-kindness: and, O that I could so do it as that he may get all the glory of it.

One night as I was in meditation, desiring matter and direction from the Lord what I would write to you, several steps of the Lord's condescendency occurred to my mind, which I had never yet recorded, with that word, *Quench not the Spirit*.—The first was in the year 1757, a little before my trouble began. One night I was much perplexed with the fear of death: I thought the Lord had supported me in many trials, but that one step, death, I had no experience of it. I might say as Joshua said to the children of Israel, *They had not passed that way before*. I was much distressed, till it pleased the Lord graciously to bear in upon my Spirit, with a sweet refreshing power, Psalm xviii. 28. *For thou wilt light my candle; the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness*. These words have often afforded me sweet views of death, many a time since.—Another step of the Lord's adorable condescendency that same year, in the reading of the scriptures, there shined such a divine glory and wisdom of God, as I never saw the like before: but whenever I closed the Bible, I lost that sweet impression of God upon my spirit, which made me often long to have all things removed, that interrupted that sweet communion and fellowship I had with God. And these words ran often in my mind, *His shoulders I took from the burdens; and freed his hands from the pots*. The Bible ever since, for the most part, hath been a sealed book to me, as for my own reading of it.—Another remarkable step of the Lord's loving-kindness; when my trouble first began, he bore in on my mind, Isa. lx. 1. *Arise, shine, for thy light is come; and the glory of the Lord is arisen upon thee*. But instead of light, I thought I had much darkness: I could not see why the Lord was contending; I did not know the voice of the rod. I thought I might say with Job, *I was not easy, yet trouble came*. And one great part of my trouble was, that providence

seemed to contradict the accomplishment of the promise: *I was so rude and ignorant, and as a beast before him.* I knew not that faith and patience was to be tried; and my unrenewed will was often unto me a battle: I could not win to submission to the will of God, which made me often cry to the Lord, that he would bring my rebellious will to submission to his holy will, and then let him do with me what seemeth him good, on purpose that he would glorify himself. Those words were often borne in on my mind, Psalm xxxvii. 4. *Delight thyself in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.* I could appeal to the searcher of hearts, that my heart's desire was the enjoyment of my sweet and lovely Jesus: but, O I could not win to patience, to wait till it pleased him to put me into the possession.

One day I looked upon Mr. Erskine's sermon, on that text, *I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.* I got my eye upon the apple of contentment, which groweth upon that blessed tree, and this filled me both with wonder and joy: I grasped greedily at it, as an hungry man at food. Contentment was what I stood much in need of; and I was glad it was in Christ to be found. Mr. Erskine saith, "That the apple of the assurance of the everlasting love of God, or the apple of the imputed righteousness of Christ, are amongst the sweetest apples that grow on this apple-tree:" but, at this time, to me none was so sweet as the apple of contentment. Contentment is a plant that doth not grow in nature's garden. I have much reason to bless the Lord, for the contentment he hath brought me to: and I desire ye would bless him also; *It is the doing of the Lord. and marvellous in our eyes.* I was very desirous to know the mind of the Lord in the fore-cited Isa. lx. 1. and some other parts of scripture I was in the dark about.—One time it pleased the Lord, when was in meditation, wishing the great Interpreter, one

amongst a thousand, would teach me his mind from his own word; immediately those other scriptures were borne in with some light and life, which I thought imported a call to some duty, *Let your light so shine before men, that others seeing your good works may glorify your Father which is in heaven:* And, *Let your moderation be known to all men, the Lord is at hand.* Yet I never got such a clear discovery of the mind of the Lord, concerning the duty, till the last year. By these two scriptures the mind of the Lord was laid more fully open; Rom. ix. 17. *Even for this purpose have I raised thee up;* John ix. 3. *That the works of God might be made manifest.* O wonderful, boundless free-love, that the Lord should manifest so much of it to so vile a sinner, and so uneloquent; and also call me to a manifestation of it. But herein shines the wisdom of God, *That the excellency of the power may be seen to be of God, who worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure.* O adore and magnify the Lord, for his free-love; and let the friends of the glorious Bridegroom know of the Bridegroom's love to so vile a sinner, that they may both love and praise him.—Let me have your welcome return. Rests your Sister, as formerly,

GREENOCK, }
June 17. 1765. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XXIII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in Glasgow.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

I HAVE been thinking of writing to you a subject that is so great and glorious, I am afraid I but darken counsel without knowledge: nevertheless, at my Lord's command, I desire to launch out into the ocean of the grace and furniture that is in our glorious

Head, who *meeteth him that rejoiceth to work righteousness, and remembereth him in all his ways.* I intend to give you some farther account of the Lord's way with me, about the time I wrote to you in my letter in January last. I am afraid I am so ignorant of my Lord's way with me, that I put want of presence for want of possession. I intend, as the Lord shall assist, to mention some scriptures that were made exceeding sweet to my soul, and a few of my meditations upon them; together with some of the effects they had upon my soul, and leave the whole to your own judgment.

I would then further observe unto you, what took place, on the day mentioned in that letter. My sweet communion and fellowship with God was first interrupted by a friend's coming in: it was so sudden, that I thought I might say with Jacob, that *the Lord went up from me, in the very place where he talked with me.* A little before that time, the Lord had called me to a duty; the omitting of it gave me very much trouble in the views of approaching death: from which I was made to see, that the omitting of duty might give much disturbance to a believer's conscience at the hour of death, although their interest in Christ was very clear. After I got the duty performed, Oh! how sweetly did the Spirit of God breath upon these scriptures, *This is your reasonable service!* This laid me in the dust before a holy God, with shame and blushing, to think he should look upon any thing done by so vile a sinner: then that word came, *Ye are accepted in the Beloved;* and, *the Lord loveth a chearful giver.* During that sore shock of trouble, Oh what sweet matter of meditation was those words to me, *Exod. xxix. 42, 43. I will meet with the children of Israel at the door of the tabernacle, and I will sanctify the tabernacle of my glory!* O the ravishing discovery I got of the Lord Jesus, the true tabernacle, where God and man meeteth amicably together! There will I meet with them, and there will I speak with them. He who is one with the Father,

is our way to the Father. O the ravishing view I got of the divine perfections of God, shining gloriously in the face of our Emmanuel, *who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person!*

Another scripture that afforded me sweet ground of meditation was, Isa. xlii. 1. *Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth.* I was made to behold the matchless love of God; in putting that service into the hand of his own Son: and also the love of the Son, who is co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal with the Father, becoming the Father's servant, to ransom and redeem us out of the hands of law and justice. I beheld him through his hard service: Jacob served for a wife, and for a wife Israel kept sheep. I think the believer may say of our Lord, as Moses' wife said of Moses, *A bloody husband art thou unto me.* I beheld justice satisfied in him; and the love of God getting an honourable egress thro' Christ, towards the chief of sinners. By these streams I was led to the fountain-head, to behold the love of God from eternity, to me in Christ. O! what could I do but wonder at his love! This sweet field will take a long eternity to travel through it.

Dear Brother, you was complaining of darkness: O come and see; come and drink; drink more abundantly: the nearer the fountain-head, the wine is the sweeter.

Now, as to the effects these glorious discoveries had upon my soul, I think I am at a loss, for want of words to clothe them with. My soul was set all in a flame of desire for the full possession: the infinite sweetness of Christ, and the matchless glory of his person, so ravished my soul, that I would have been glad the eyes of my faith were never off this glorious object, till faith were swallowed up in vision, and hope in fruition: then I shall see him as he is, and be satisfied with his likeness. At this time I thought that ten thousand deaths would have been nothing to me to have had the

enjoyment of my Lord.—An acquaintance looking upon me said, I never saw you so mortal like; and then fell a weeping: at the hearing of which I smiled for joy to hear of the symptoms of approaching death; and then said, I am heartily content that my body go down to the dust, for my Lord will raise it again a more glorious body.—I will tell you what the sweet-smelling rose of Sharon hath done for me. O his grace-giving garments sendeth forth a sweet smell: by his sweet savour he hath perfumed a sick-bed, he hath perfumed the grave, he hath unstinged death. Glory to his name he hath done all things for me.—Another effect those glorious discoveries had upon my soul, they discovered new wants; want of love to God, and want of holy reverential fear of God: *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints; and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.* I dare not say but my soul was filled with something of a holy dread of God, which increased new fears of sinning against him, and longing for conformity to God. I think the situation of my soul was like that which Dr. Owen speaks of: he saith, “The soul overpowered by the
“force of its own love, fainteth; being raised by a
“sense of Christ’s love, rejoiceth.”—O but these old bottles can hold little of the new wine of heaven: when they are made new, both will be preserved together.

At this time that scripture was to me like a crowning of all the rest, 2 Sam. i. 23. *Saul and Jonathan were loving and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided.* This was to me a sweet representation of Christ and the believer, of their pleasant living together.—O blessed, blessed be God, that in their death they were not divided. *That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son, Jesus Christ,* 1 John i. 3.

I received your two letters; for which I desire to bless the Lord for your kindness to me, and for the

sweet refreshment my soul found in them, by the Spirit of the Lord breathing upon them.—I fevered since I began to write to you; and I have been very much afraid for the loss of my reason, because of the violent pain of my head, and the violent assaults of Satan: his fiery darts have been like to drink up my spirits. Let me have your sympathy at the throne of grace, and the sympathy of other friends. Grace and peace be with you,

GREENOCK, }
Sep. 18. 1765. }

MARION LAIRD.

P. S. Let me have your welcome return as soon as possible.

L E T T E R XXIV.

To Mr. J——s G——r, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

I RECEIVED your letter on Saturday. I desire to bless the Lord for your kindness; and the kindness of other friends to me, who am less than the least of God's mercies; and do not deserve the notice of any, far less the notice of him who is infinitely fairer than the sons of men. I am unfit to speak to your case; as I was enabled I laid it before him who hath the tongue of the learned, and speaks a word in season to a weary soul. What I think he saith to you ye may read in John xvi. 22. and Isa. xxxv. 4. lvii. 18. Put him to his word; he loveth to be taken at it.

On Sabbath last I took a very great pain in my knees; it went to my heart, and occasioned me to faint: I had some thought that it had been present death, till that word came, *The vision is yet for an appointed time*. During that sore shock, the sweet sense of the love of

God was withdrawing, which I enjoyed through the former part of the day, and this occasioned me to take a new view of my charters to the inheritance, *viz.* the promises.

Since twelve o'clock on Sabbath evening, I have been easier of the pain, but continued sick; and have had since a very sweet impression of the love of God on my soul.—I desire both the prayers and praises of your congregation: pray for grace to enable me to glorify God in the furnace; and praise him for his truth and the kindness of his love.—I got a little breathing concerning your daughter; with that word, *Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hand to God.* You must excuse my shortness till the Lord give another opportunity. Remember me to friends in Christ. Rests your Sister in the Lord,

GREENOCK, }
Oct. 29. 1765. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XXV.

TO JAMES MITCHELL, *a Christian acquaintance.*

Dear and loving Friend,

IN answer to your desire, all I intend through divine assistance is to mention a few remarks concerning the Lord's way with me through the wilderness. O that I could make mention of the loving-kindness of the Lord, so that he may get all the glory, and others be excited to love, praise, and adore him who *is altogether lovely.* I have been very distressed with trouble in my body, and also much assaulted by Satan, since I saw you: yet I have reason to say it to the praise of the Lord, it hath been my unspeakable mercy to behold the rod in the hand of a loving Father; which view makes me to conclude there is nothing in my rod

but what is for his own glory and my good : this makes me sweetly to acquiesce in his will, and to say, *The cup which my Father giveth me, shall I not drink it ?*

I remember often, with grief, that in my younger years, I was much assaulted by Satan to question my interest in Christ ; and my unbelieving heart sided with Satan in witnessing against the work of the Spirit in my own soul. After many remarkable manifestations of his loving-kindness, I often acted as if God had been changed in his love when I was changed in my frame : I often believed his word no longer than the Spirit of God shined upon his own word. O the many wounds I have given glorious Christ by unbelief ! This made me think, were it possible there could be sorrow in heaven, for the sin of unbelief, I would be grieved because I have done so little for Christ upon the earth.

Satan hath now taken another way of assaulting, and that is to question divine truths, and that immediately after I have found the sweet and powerful influence of them upon my own soul. I have had little trouble about my state for some years bygone. When challenges ariseth from whatsoever quarter, I send them to glorious Christ who hath satisfied justice, and fulfilled the holy law : for I am persuaded that God will not charge the debt both upon the Surety and upon the sinner : no ; *He is well-pleased for his righteousness sake : he hath magnified the law and made it honourable.* It is the doing and dying of our Lord Jesus that is the alone ground of my confidence before God, and acceptance with him ; there my soul finds a sweet rest. If this be not the way that brings glory to God, and salvation to sinners, I have nothing but blank paper for heaven.

Wednesday was eight-days was a day with me of sweet communion and fellowship with God : that was a savory word to me, John xx. 17. *I ascend unto my Father, and your Father ; unto my God, and your God.*

O but that is a sweet and endearing relation.—I saw such a sight of that union betwixt the Father and the Son, and believers in him, *I in them, and they in me*, that I thought I would not have been behind, to have lived upon it to a long eternity. My soul is often breathing out one of three desires, *viz.* O that I could glorify him; O that I could love him; O that I had my soul's fill of his sweet love. But what gets my Lord of me, but empty wishes?—Give my kind respects to William Crawford and Elizabeth Gibson. I charge them to help a divour to pay the debt of praise to our sweet and lovely Lord Jesus. Grace and peace from the Lord Jesus be with you,

GREENOCK, }
Nov. 13. 1765. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XXVI.

To the Rev. Mr. THOMAS CLARK, in *America*.

Reverend and worthy Sir,

IT hath been upon my heart to write unto you, for this and some other reasons, *viz.* that I might have the help of your prayers and praises to God.—Sir, I was persuaded, from scripture, that the Lord called you to the island where you now reside.—I desire to know if religion be growing in it, and if glorious Christ be received in it, as he is offered in the gospel. I desire to acknowledge it, to the praise of God, that when I have heard you and other ministers preach Christ, I believed it was a true report ye gave of him; and by the grace of God I was enabled to acquiesce in him, as all my salvation and all my desire: yet I may say of our Lord Jesus, as the queen of Sheba said of the wisdom of Solomon, 2 Chron. ix. 6. The greatness of the acts of his loving-kindness, won-

derful condescendence, infinite sweetness, ravishing glory, and matchless excellencies, that I have found in Christ, these eight years of my affliction, the *one half of it hath not been told*. O but our Lord Jesus is kind to prisoners: he was a prisoner himself; *He was taken from prison and from judgment: who can declare his generation?* The sweet embraces my soul hath got of him, by faith, many a time hath helped me to trace the streams of divine love to their fountain-head, and to read my name amongst the living in Jerusalem. O blessed be God that I, wretched I, miserable I, should have been upon the heart of God before the foundation of the world was laid. Glory to God in the highest, for Christ and redeeming love through him. O! how does the wisdom of God shine in his glorious plan of redemption! wonderful love! wonderful holiness! wonderful power! wonderful justice! wonderful truth! O how bright does these glorious attributes and perfections of God shine in the person of our Emmanuel! My soul has been admitted to travel, by faith, in that sweet field, with wonder and admiration, till my natural strength was almost exhausted, because my narrow vessel could hold so little of that infinite fulness. O but that hath been a sweet word to me, Phil. iii. 20. *We look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body*: then it will be made a strong and spiritual body, and able to bear that eternal weight of glory that will be conferred on it at the appearance of Christ. Yet, in these sweet hours I have been mentioning; Oh! how often has pride and self, those abominable rivals of King Jesus, been attempting to de-throne him out of the heart, and to rob him of the glory of his grace! O to be delivered from sin, and the inbeing of it.

Sometime after my trouble began, it pleased the Lord to breathe upon these words, Psal. lxxii. 7. *In his days shall the righteous flourish: and abundance of*

peace so long as the sun endureth. I must say, to the praise of God, that he has maintained abundant inward peace; a joy, and peace in believing; but a peace with a continual war. O how rare a season is it, that I get peace from a desperately wicked heart and a tempting devil? I long for the out-making of that word, *Those Egyptians, whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see no more.*—I am waiting for the salvation of God.

Sir, pray that the Lord may enable me to wait with patience, and that he may make me active for glorifying him upon the earth. O praise him for what he hath already done. I am persuaded a tribute of praise is due to our sweet and lovely Lord Jesus from me, above many thousands.—Sir, O pray for a reviving to the poor backsliding Church of Scotland. That the consolations of the Holy Spirit may be multiplied unto you, is the desire of your affectionate friend,

GREENOCK, }
Dec. 17. 1765. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XXVII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glasgow*.

Beloved Brother in our Lord Jesus,

ALL I intend at present, thro' divine assistance, is a few observations concerning the Lord's way with me since the 8th of December last.—O that I could commend the Lord and his ways to others, who hath first commended his love to me. His amazing love, and astonishing condescendence hath been very wonderful unto me; *Extol the Lord with me, let us exalt his name together.*

On the foresaid 8th of December, being the Sabbath day, I had a very unpleasant morning, by reason of inward corruption. I could not get any nearness to

God, which is my life. Miss M'Cunn asked me what sermon she would read unto me : I desired her to read that sermon of Mr. Erskine's, intituled, *The promising God a performing God*. What I had my eye unto, in that sermon was, what the Lord had spoken concerning the *day of death* : when that day comes, he will do as he hath said. It pleased the Lord to breath upon that ordinance ; and made it very refreshful to me, and I thought to her also ; for she said, Mr. Erskine's book was the sweetest book to her, of all others, except the Bible.

After she left me, I looked upon the last page of the sermon, where there were many promises repeated. I rembered that there were but few of them, but what the Lord had made, sometime or other, good to me : this remembrance filled my soul with unspeakable joy. But while I looked upon them, I over-stretched my weak body so far, that the exquisite pain went so piercingly to my heart, that I almost fainted. After a little recovery, those two scriptures afforded me a sweet composure, and a solid ground of meditation : *The feeble shall be as David, and David as the angel of the Lord ; and the lame man shall leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing*. All the private duties and ordinances I had the priviledge of enjoying that night, were very delightful to me, on account of the sweet favour of Christ, I found in them.

About two in the morning. I got the most sweet and soul-ravishing discovery of glorious Christ, in some respects, that I ever saw in any former period of my life. O his garments smelled of myrrh, aloes, and cassia.—The garment of his *righteousness* is a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling favour : it puts away the stinking favour of sin.—The garment of his *graces* casts a sweet smell, when the wind of the Spirit bloweth upon them : *His name is as ointment poured forth*. The sweet odour of his ointment filled the spiritual senses of my soul with a sweet and pleasant perfume. Christ is the quin-

tessence of all odoriferous smells; the perfection of beauties: *His mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely.*

For two weeks I slept little. Blessed be God who kept both my head and heart very composed: my thoughts were much enlarged in viewing the love of God, the spring of our redemption; the righteousness of Christ, the channel through which it is conveyed to us; his offices and endearing relations, the ground of our joy and consolation. O what a beast am I, that can love him so little! I think the Lord makes me a demonstration of the power and reality that is in religion. Parts of my skin are extremely sore, like a burning fire; and it is a burden for me to lift up my own hand. Glory to him, that notwithstanding of all this I never found a sweeter composure of spirit: yea, he made me willing to bless him for the rod; to bless him, because it was his good pleasure to afflict me; and to bless him, because he made me willing to bless him: *This is the Lord's doing, it is marvellous in our eyes.* That saying of St. Paul's was a sweet word to me, *For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* I got two large views upon it: 1. The *vanity* of that gain which so many in the world ardently seek after, which leaves them comfortless in the day of death. 2. The *greatness* of that gain which they obtain who gain Christ: they live upon their gain thro' eternity, and live with their gain: their gain will be matter of eternal wonder and praise.

On the 25th of December, I was sensible of the with-drawing of the divine support. Immediately I began to sink under the pressure of my trouble; and I was afraid of dishonouring the Lord by discontentment. Glory to God he immediately supported me by those scriptures, Heb. xii. 2. *Consider him, who for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, and despised the shame:* Exod. xv. 23, 24, 25. Christ, the tree of life, and the tree of his cross, sweetens the bitter water of afflictions. By this I got new strength and new

resignation to the will of God. Upon which the two following observations occurred to my mind, 1. That without Christ I could do nothing: I saw I could not bear my trouble half an hour with contentment: I saw also, that *through Christ strengthening me, I could do all things*. 2. I saw they were greatly to be pitied who had much affliction, and nothing of Christ to sweeten them.

Dear friend, it is but a very little hint I can give you, of what the Lord made the sweet subject of my meditation.—O that ye would praise him for his divine support, to so vile a sinner. Grace and peace be with you,

GREENOCK, }
Jan. 28. 1766. }

MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I received a line from your son; but have not been able to look over your letter since that time; therefore I cannot give you my sentiments concerning what you proposed: only this far, the principal thing I can see culpable in them, is your sin of unbelief, which ye see yourself.—I long to know of your spiritual welfare; and also of Mrs. Glen's welfare, and if she has attained to any more submission to the will of God, with respect to an outgate from her trouble. If she be able I would be glad she would favour me with a line.—Be so good as indulge me with a return,

Feb. 3d, }
1766. }

M. L.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

TO ALEXANDER PARKER, my Cousin.

Dear and loving Cousin,

I OWE much respect to you, both by the tie of nature, grace, and gratitude. The greatest kindness I think I can do unto you, if I could do it, is to commend unto you glorious Christ, and practical religion. If I, by the blessing of God, could be instrumental in encouraging you to run your race a little swifter, it would be the greatest kindness I could do you: *Know you not, that they which run in a race, run all; but one receiveth the prize? So run that ye may obtain,* 1 Cor. ix. 24. It is much for the comfort of runners to know that they are in the way: *Christ is the way, the truth, and the life.* All who run in this way will, in the end, receive a crown of unfading glory, and the eternal embraces of him who is *altogether lovely, and the chief among ten thousand.*

Cousin, permit me, at this time, to tender a few advices to you. And,

1. My first advice to you therefore is to be much in the duty of *self-examination*. Indeed it is above the reach of either men or angels, to accomplish a diligent search of this kind, unless the searcher of hearts take the work in his own hand, and, by his searching, the light, leading, and guiding power of his word and Spirit, effectually go through it, ye will pass a wrong sentence on it, and put darkness for light, and light for darkness. O therefore let your eyes be towards the Lord for direction.

2. Be much in the duty of *spiritual meditation*: this is a duty the Lord very much countenances; *Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness; those that remember thee in thy ways,* Isa. lxiv. 5. I

would commend this duty unto all, so far as my word would go, from the sweet experience I have had of the Lord's giving much countenance unto it. Ye may have sweet communion and fellowship with God in that duty, while you are employed about your lawful calling. God has a way of conversing with the believer, and the believer has a way of conversing with God, through Christ by faith: *My beloved spake unto me and said, Rise up my love, my fair one, and come away, &c.* And what is faith, but just the echo of the soul answering the word of grace? *Behold I come unto thee; for thou art the Lord my God.*

3. Treasure up the *promises* in your mind; they are the fuel of faith: faith can as little act without the promise, as fire can burn without fuel: therefore let your mind be always like the pot in the ark, filled with the manna of the word. A promise, hid in the heart, may do you service when you have neither access to read nor to hear the word preached.

4. Meditate much *upon the promises*: they are the sweetest lines in Christ's love-letter to his spouse: majesty appears in the command, and severity in the threatening; but love and mercy predominates in the promise.

Dear Cousin, live a life of faith upon the Son of God. If ye be living by faith upon the Son of God, the glory of God will be the chief end of your life, and ye will have a continual conflict with self, and how to get self-ends mortified.—Alas! I see self-ends creeping in on me in every duty: *The true circumcision rejoices in Christ, having no confidence in the flesh.* Sense has its only foundation and confidence within; it treads in the shallow waters of created grace, experimental attainments, marks of grace, and the like: but faith has its foundation without the man, in Christ, in God's covenant, in the great and precious promises. Mr. Erskine says, "It is a legal temper in believers, when their assurance is lost by challenges. It may be the

man enjoys a sweet measure of assurance ; but behold a sin prevaieth, and conscience challengeth him : thereupon he razeth all. This is an evidence of a legal temper ; contrary to that gospel spirit ye may see acted in David, Psal. lxxv. 3. *Iniquity prevaieth against me ; it prevaieth against my heart and against my will ; against my prayers, against my secret wrestlings and groans, and against my resolutions. Shall I thereupon raze the foundation of my faith ? No ; I will fly to the atoning blood of the Lamb of God to cleanse and purge both from the guilt and power of sin, and maintain my confidence in him : As for our iniquities thou shalt purge them away.*

Cousin, are ye indeed engaged in the battle with the nations ? Know for your encouragement, that the Lord your God will drive them out from before you by little and little. Put the nations in the hand of your captain to destroy them ; and endeavour, in so doing, the daily exercise of faith and prayer. Pray for a reviving to the backsliding age ye live in.—That grace and peace may be with you, is the sincere desire of your Cousin,

GREENOCK, }
March 5. 1766. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XXIX.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Friend, and beloved of our Lord,

I RECEIVED your letter from your son. One part of it was very sweet and refreshful ; the other part of it was very bitter : what of Christ that was in it, was sweet to me ; but to hear of the sinnings of professors, was exceeding bitter.

I have had the opportunity to see much of the

changeableness of the creature these eight years of my affliction. Mr. Brooks saith, "A summer friend I value not; but a winter friend is worth his weight of gold." I was thinking upon the changeableness of some of my acquaintances; and while I was employed in thinking upon them, Isa. liv. 10. was brought to my mind: *But my loving-kindness shall not depart from thee; neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord.* There I got a manifold sweeter view of the unchangeable love of God, than I could have got in all the creatures.

All I intend, at present, is to observe unto you a few of the astonishing acts of the loving-kindness of the Lord which are great and wonderful.

I would observe unto you, what took place when the sacrament of the Lord's supper was dispensed last at Crawford's-dyke. I desire to speak it to the praise of God, who *worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* It pleased the Lord often to lay upon my Spirit a concern for a day of power, and of the Lord's presence to minister's and people. Upon the Saturday that word ran in my mind, *Sanctify yourselves, for to-morrow the Lord will do wonders among you,* Joshua iii. 5. On the Sabbath, when I was saying prayer, it was impressed on my mind, to plead that the Lord would breath upon that text of scripture. Mr. Cock was then to preach upon. This put me to a stand; for I was afraid the impression had come from Satan, who is very subtle, and ready to inject something upon the mind to draw the heart off the object of worship. I reasoned with myself, and said, Why should I limit the holy One of Israel to one part of his word besides another? I then desired that the Lord would shine upon that, or any other part of his word that was for his own glory. I was much enlarged in pleading to that purpose; and while I was pleading, Isa. xxxii. 2. was brought to my mind, with such singularity attending it, as really made me think it was

the text. A very large field occurred to me from it for meditation.—I only observe three particulars unto you.

1. I got a very sweet and heart-affecting view of the MAN who is *a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest*, taking the law-room of guilty sinners, and windy tempest of God's wrath breaking upon the head of our glorious Surety, when Jehovah ordered *the sword of justice to awake against the man that is God's Fellow, and smite the shepherd*, till the sword of justice got satisfaction in his blood. Herein shines the manifold wisdom of God in that glorious device of salvation.

2. I got a view of the *distressed condition* of the wretched sinner, forced to Sinai, where God descendeth in all the awful circumstances of his terrible majesty, thunderings, and curses: Gal. iii. 10. *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.*

3. When Christ apprehends a sinner by his Spirit, and enables them to apprehend him by faith, O with what pleasure do they then sit down under his shadow; the covert of his blood and righteousness is a sweet shadow. Many other things occurred to me, viz. What he is a shadow from, and what sort of a shadow he is.—But I leave those things to your own meditation.

I asked one where Mr. Cock had his text; she said, Isa. xxxii. 2. Then I was amazed at the condescending love of God, that condescendeth so very low, that before a poor prisoner want preaching, he will preach himself by his word and Spirit.

On another Sabbath, as I was looking on Isa. xlii. 6. I was surprized with a ravishing view both of the giver and the gift. *I, the glorious Jehovah, speaking to his eternal and well-beloved Son; I will give thee for a covenant of the people.* Such power and sweetness, light and life, did accompany those words, which

made me often repeat these words over and over, *my life, my life*, till my strength failed me, and my thoughts were almost swallowed up in wonder. I got leave to appropriate Christ to myself as my righteousness, my wisdom, and my strength. In a word, I saw nothing but wants and imperfections in myself; but I saw all that I stood in need of in glorious Christ: and much of the day was spent in travelling betwixt his fulness and my emptiness.—Glory to God in the highest, that Sabbath-days were never sweeter to me, since I wanted public ordinances, than they were the last summer: ordinary Sabbaths were as high communion-days.

I desire you, and other friends, would help a divour to pay the debt of praise to our sweet and altogether-lovely Lord Jesus.—O that I could, by the blessing of God, raise your esteem of him higher who is the perfection of beauty: *His mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely.* My soul was so ravished with his beauty and matchless excellency, that the first sight ever I saw of him I would gladly have gone to heaven with him.—That his consolations may be multiplied unto you, is the desire of your Sister, in the Lord,

GREENOCK, }
April 10. 1766. }

MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I would count it a very great favour, if you would desire any of your Christian acquaintances, when they are coming to this place, to be so good as give a call, and converse a little with me. I have been much refreshed with some who have done so from your city.

M. L.

L E T T E R XXX.

TO JAMES WILSON, *my Brother-in-law.*

Loving and affectionate Brother,

ON the receipt of yours, I endeavoured to attend to the contents of it: And therein I perceived several things.

1. Ye say, "I would know if we be lovers of our Lord Jesus." It is true; but I am not satisfied with so general an answer. If ye be lovers of God, your love to him is a fruit of his love to you; and you have been convinced of your natural enmity against him, and see that you could never have loved him, unless he had first manifested himself to you. Some speak as if it were natural for them to love God: poor creatures, they never saw nor considered that they were born with a dagger of enmity in their heart against God. True lovers of God, have seen their want of love to God, and the strength and power of their enmity against him; and have gotten it broken, in some measure, in a day of his power.

2. Ye say, "There are two sorts of sons of God; the one by generation, the other by adoption." I know none that are the sons of God by *generation*, but his beloved Son, by eternal and ineffable generation, who is co-equal, co-essential, and co-eternal with the Father, Isa. liii. 8. *Who shall declare his generation.*

3. Ye say, "I bless him that he died for such sinners of Adam's family, such as ye are." I desire ye would beware of a general faith, condemned by our national covenant, as a branch of popery. A general persuasion of the mercy of God in Christ, and of his willingness and ability to save sinners, will not do the business.

I would ask you how the saints come to get the

knowledge of the love of God? I answer, they get it by believing his love to them in Christ, with application to themselves; 1 John iv. 16. *We have known the Father, and believed the love of God to us.* Divine love acts freely; God dwells not with us upon any terms conditionally; nor valuable considerations in us. We can neither beg heaven, nor buy it; it must be given us: therefore let not the greatest civilist presume, nor the greatest sinner despair: God's love is first on the field; dark threatening providences are attended with bringing his people's sins to remembrance; as you may see, 1 Kings xvii. 18. *And she said, Art thou come to slay my son, and bring my sin to remembrance.* Hath the Lord, by the death of your children, and the rod upon yourself, been bringing your sins to remembrance? hath he been discovering to you your wicked heart, and polluted nature? and been telling you all things that ever you did, and thereby discovered to you the absolute need ye have of Christ? The convictions of the Spirit are humbling, and tend to make the soul despair of help in itself, or in God out of Christ: but the temptations of Satan tend to make the soul despair of hope in Christ, or in God through him. The former shuts the door of access by the law, but Satan would shut the door of access by the gospel.

I would have you carefully distinguish betwixt your warrant to believe, and power to believe; your right and warrant to believe is grounded on the gospel-offer: the promises, together with God's commanding you to believe, constitute your warrant to believe, and make unbelief your sin: but power to believe, is from the Spirit of God, in his saving operations.—O therefore cry to God, for the powerful operations of the Spirit to accompany the dispensations of the word.

I understand you have been perplexed about the meaning of some scriptures: perhaps you know not well whether they came by the Spirit of God, or from Satan. I will give you a note of Mr. Erskine's upon

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that head; he saith, "A word that cometh from Satan bears Satan's image, which is pride and unholiness, and tendeth to make a man proud and carnal. But a word from God, bears God's image, and maketh a man holy and humble." He further saith, "A promise of the Lord is always a glass wherein the glory of the Lord appeareth, whereby the soul is changed from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord." Whatever your burdens are, cast your burdens upon the burden-bearer of Israel, and he will bear you and your burden both. Cast yourself over upon him, and your family upon him, and all that concerns you, either for time or eternity; and he will make a good account of all that is committed to him.—That the Lord may enable you, by his grace, so to do, is the desire of your Sister,

GREENOCK, }
May 16. 1765. }

MARION LAIRD.

P. S. Dear and loving Sister, be frequently pleading the promises in prayer: the promises are God's bond; and God's bond is to be pursued in the court of grace, at the throne of grace. *For these things will I be enquired of by the house of Israel.* This was David's way; *Lord remember the word on which thou hast caused me to hope.*

Yours, &c.

M. L.

L E T T E R XXXI.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glasgow*.

Loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

I KNOW not how soon the Lord may finish his work with me, and cut it short in righteousness. That hath been a very sweet word to me since I saw you, Heb. x. 37. *For yet a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.* O pray, that the Lord may enable me to spend that *little while* to his glory. — O that time would fly away, that eternity would come: then farewell faith, and welcome vision; farewell hope, and welcome fruition; farewell grace, and welcome glory; farewell partial communion with God, and welcome uninterrupted and everlasting communion with my God.

I was ill for some weeks after you was here: I was seized with such a sleepy condition, that I could do nothing but cry for life from the life-giving God. O for activity to glorify him. I found the sweet and great advantage of having one at the Father's right-hand, whom I could confidently trust, with all that concerned me.

I intend to give you a little account of what was the subject of my meditation on the first day of May last. I intend to do it in the order it occurred to me. It hath been the Lord's way with me, under my trouble, often to give me a new meal upon old experiences; and ordinarily, when he doth so, he discovers some secret purposes I saw not before. I think the Lord is still making out that truth to a believer, which he spoke to Peter, *What I do now, thou knowest not; but thou shalt know hereafter.* On the foresaid day I was led to take a view of my wicked heart, and polluted nature, in the glass of the holy law of God: when I view my-

self there, O but my face looks foul; every step of my life fills me with abhorrence; and makes me cry, *Unclean, unclean*: but the sin of unbelief appeared to be the head and shoulders higher than all the rest.—O but a view of the love of God, and the enmity of my own heart, is matter of wonder.

Upon the back of this, the Lord brought to my remembrance a very pleasant and refreshing view of the sweet and glorious days I had in hearing the gospel in Crawford's-dyke, from the year 1753, to the end of 1757. O the light, life, and power that then accompanied the gospel! The sails of my soul were often filled with so much of the wind of joy, that I would have been in danger of being overfet, had not many other weights, that lay heavy upon my spirit, counterbalanced my joy. One of these three lay heavy upon my spirit, *viz.* either the case of the Church, or the case of the congregation, or some of my near relations. For of a truth, zeal for the glory of God never burnt hotter than when he admitted me nearest to himself.—The glorious manifestation of the love of God in Christ, often influenced me to embrace the Lord as all my salvation and all my desire; and to give myself away to him, without any known guile. The Lord is my witness, my conscience is witness, the timber and walls of that house are witnesses, to the many sweet days I have had in it, although much of the scum of corruption hath cast up since that time. I dare appeal to the searcher of hearts, I never rued the bargain: No, no. I would not take my word again for a thousand worlds.—I saw glorious Christ, and the fulness of God in him, to be such a soul-enriching portion, that I often resolved, through his grace, to be content with him for my portion, and with any lot he was pleased to carve out for me in the world, however distressing.

No sin was I influenced to resolve against more than the sin of discontentment; the Lord knew that this was the side I was to be most tried at.—At this time

Satan set fore upon me, and tempted to envy the prosperity of others; a sin opposite to the holy law of God, which requireth full contentment. I was made to say upon the matter, but in another sense, as Haman said of Mordecai, Esther v. 13. *What doth it avail me, while Mordecai sits at the king's gate?* I was made to say upon the matter, What would worldly riches or honours avail me, while I want conformity to God's law; and while my corruptions are in the gate of king Jesus coming into my heart? What would it avail me, to possess all sublunary enjoyments, in the most affluent manner, while these uneasy thorns of corruption remain? The sweet and soul-reviving discoveries that I had got of glorious Christ, *The brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person*, and all the perfections of God shining gloriously in him; these glorious sights, I say, much darkened all created glories to me: thereby the power of that temptation was broken.—O that those things may excite you, and other friends, to praise and thankfulness to God for his abundant grace to me, the chief of sinners. That grace and truth may be with you, is the desire of your friend,

GREENOCK, }
June 10. 1766. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XXXII.

TO MR. ROBERT STEWART, in Paisley.

Dear and loving Cousin,

YOUR letter, dated July 10th, came to hand. You ask me that question our Lord asked the Pharisees, Matth. xxii. 42. *What think ye of Christ?* It is very little I can either speak or think of him. O for the spirit of wisdom and revelation, in the know-

ledge of Christ! As we may expect to be examined and catechised by God, with respect to our thoughts, as well as our actions; so especially of our thoughts concerning Christ: and as God will judge and try us by our thoughts, so we ought to judge and try ourselves by this rule: for, *as our thoughts are, so are we*, Prov. xxiii. 7. Yea, God's thoughts of us are according as our thoughts are of Christ; if we think nothing of Christ, God thinks nothing of us: if we think highly of Christ, God thinks highly of us in him. God's thoughts of Christ are very high and honourable: he is the darling of his Father's delight, Isa. xlii. 1. Woes me that I can think so little of Christ the anointed of God! *God hath anointed him with the oil of joy above his fellows.* Altho' I can think little or nothing of Christ, to his praise I desire to speak it, I have sometimes got such a manifestation of his glory, and such a smell of his ointment, that the sweet odour thereof filled my soul; and the sweet perfume of it had an abiding impression for some days. O his name smelled of heaven: *Because of the good savour of his ointment, his name was as ointment poured forth.*—O! his garments smelled of heaven; all his garments smelled of *aloes, myrrh, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces.* The garment of his righteousness is a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour unto God; the sweet perfume thereof puts away the stinking smell of sin. The garment of his graces casteth forth a sweet smell, when the wind of the Spirit bloweth upon them: when the north and south wind awaketh, the spices sendeth forth a pleasant smell: *He is white and ruddy, the chief among ten thousand: his head is as the most fine gold; his countenance is as Lebanon; more excellent than the cedars: his mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely.*

You ask me what I think of Christ's sufferings in the garden and on the cross. I think we act not faith far enough for redemption, unless we follow Christ from the cross to the bar of God's justice court in heaven,

to see all sealed and secured within the vail, where his blood is exposed, as it were, to plead at the bar, where mercy and justice both meet together, and embrace each other.—What views have you got of the glory of God shining in the face of Jesus Christ, and of those attributes of God meeting and embracing each other in him? Have you seen the glory, and felt the virtue of this happy meeting? Have you seen the *glory* of it? When once a day you had seen the attributes of God in arms against you, because of your sin and rebellion against him; when you saw the truth of God ready pronouncing the sentence of the law, and his righteousness and justice ready to execute the sentence, and to inflict the same with curses and vengeance, that you despaired of mercy, that you give up all expectation of peace with God, by the works of the law; have you thereupon, I say, got a view of the harmonious meeting of the divine attributes of God in Christ Jesus, as the Surety, the Sacrifice, the Ransom, the Propitiation, wherein the truth and veracity of God is accomplished; righteousness and justice satisfied; that so mercy and peace might vent gloriously, without the least detriment to any of the excellencies and perfections of God? The more clear views you have of this happy and glorious meeting, the more stability in the faith.—What is your reason for desiring the Spirit, especially at the hour of death? Is it for that end that you may be enabled to glorify God thereby? The glory of God should be our chief end in every thing. And what is the chief end of God? It is even that he may glorify himself in all his perfections, and enjoy himself for ever? And how doth God most brightly glorify himself? It is in Christ, the meeting-place of these perfections, with a view to our redemption, to the highest praise and glory of his grace, whereby *he hath made us accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. i. 6.

By reason of my present distress, I must break off.

Let me have the help of your prayers, with others of your acquaintances. Rests your affectionate Cousin,

GREENOCK, }
Oct. 6th, 1766. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glasgow*.

Loving and affectionate Brother in Christ,

I RECEIVED your letter, dated the 2d of August. I desire to bless the Lord for the sweet refreshing I found in it, and for your kindness unto me, who am less than the least of the Lord's mercies.—O what am I, or what is my Father's house, that hitherto the Lord hath helped me? —That day I heard of Mrs. Ewing's falling before the temptation; a sin against the very light of nature, and law of God, *Thou shalt not kill*, Exod. xx. 13. I was sore grieved: deaths of that nature have been very shocking unto me; until the Lord brought to my remembrance the many great deliverances he had wrought for myself, which was matter for a song of praise to my great deliverer. I had no intent to write any more of that temptation, having written thereof before; but I am constrained to it by these words, *Strengthen thy brethren*; and *Quench not the Spirit*. All I intend is to mention a few of these deliverances; and, O that you and all that heard thereof may be excited to a song of praise to God, and encouraged to set your hope in him, who never suffered me to be tempted above what he made me able to bear. Glory to his name.

About the end of September 1741, I was much afraid I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost: then Satan tempted me to put an end to my miserable life; he often presented instruments for that purpose,

which made me to tremble. Then the Lord said to me, *Fear not, I have the keys of hell and of death*, Rev. i. 18. That week I heard Mr. Ballantine preach: at the close of his sermon, he offered Christ to every man and woman on this side of hell. The offer was very suitable to my case; my necessity was so great, I must not stand doubting whether I had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost or not: I must have Christ, or I shall perish without him.—And over all the opposition I was made to say, *Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*

By the long experience I had of that temptation, I observed there was always something in my disposition Satan suited the temptation unto: he also made use of motives to persuade me to it, and fall in with it; as may be observed in his temptations to our Lord in the 4th of Matthew. It was my sinful unbelieving way to mistrust the power and faithfulness of God; and so I was often in fear of falling. And this was the motive Satan made longest use of, *viz.* that the longer I continued a professor of religion, I would dishonour God the more at the end of it. O what could be more grieving to me than the thoughts of dishonouring God! for often the Lord kept in my view the great dishonour the committing that sin would be unto him: and to his praise I have cause to speak it, that the more Satan tempted me to dishonour God, he made zeal for his own glory to burn the hotter; which made me often answer Satan to this purpose, “Shall I thus dishonour the Lord? Shall I grieve the spirits of his people? Shall I commit this great wickedness, and sin against God? No, no: through his grace I never will.” Yet my resolutions were accompanied with so much fear, as made me often look to my once tempted, but now exalted Lord, with the tear in my eye, and say, *Lord, make thy grace sufficient for me?*

One evening, as I was upon the street, Satan violently assaulted me to go into the sea and drown my-

self; it would be the easiest death. Such a fear of Satan then fell upon me, as made my joints to shake, so that it was much for me to walk home; and when I came to the door, I found nobody within: I was afraid to go into the house lest Satan should get power over me. When thus perplexed, then that sweet word came, Psalm cxxi. 8. *The Lord shall preserve thy going out, and thy coming in, from this time forth, even for ever more.*—In the firm faith of this, I entered the house, shut the door, and went to my knees. I got very near access to God, which was always my relief.

One day, a day very remarkable for communion and fellowship with God, when employed about my lawful calling, as I was in a room, with a knife in my hand, Satan made a new assault, to put a period to my life. O blessed be the Lord, who helped me above the fear of Satan: I answered him, “Be it known unto thee, “O thou restless enemy, that *in God my glory is placed, and my salvation is sure.*” On the Sabbath day following, it pleased the Lord to draw aside the veil, and give me a glimpse of the glory of the whole Trinity: so exceeding great, and soul-ravishing was the glory of God, that shined in the face of Jesus Christ, that I was so far swallowed up in beholding that divine glory, that nature was much wasted. I had a sweet impression of that glorious sight until the next Sabbath morning: then my Beloved was gone; and my heart, that is a magazine of hell, where corruptions lie like a barrel of gun-powder, ready to take fire with every spark of temptation, when blown up by hellish injections from Satan, into such a flame that I was afrighted at the sight, and abhorred myself, that ever such unbecoming thoughts of God should come into my mind. I then arose and went to duties, to seek the Lord; but I found him not. Then I went to the public ordinances, where I found him the day before; but I found him not there. I wist not then what to do, nor where to find him: then I remembered that the disciples went

to the place where Jesus was wont to resort; I then went to a secret place where I had found him sometimes before: by this time I had lost the sweet and lively impressions of a reconciled God in Christ; and the awful majesty of God made me afraid to approach unto him in prayer. I sat down astonished; I was greatly distressed by the hell of corruption that was within: then Satan came with his old temptation, and represented the water in the place. The motive he made use of was, that by putting an end to my own life, I would get an end of sin. The Lord then seasonably appeared for my help, and said unto me, *He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved*, Matth. xxiv. 13. O Sirs, when our sweet and lovely Lord Jesus comes to a poor sinner, O what a train of blessings he brings along with him! He rebuked the devil; he rebuked a raging sea of corruption; he commanded a peace in my soul; *He put a new song in my mouth, even praises to our God*.—That the God of peace, who shall bruise Satan shortly under our feet, may be with you, and all the Israel of God, is the desire of your Sister, in the Lord,

GREENOCK, }
Nov. 11. 1766. }

MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I wrote you some small hints of the sanctified effects of those temptations, by the Lord's blessing upon them. I have seen them to be wisely ordered of God for the reasons mentioned in my letter of January 7th, 1764.—The two Sabbaths, mentioned above, Mr. Cock preached on Psal. lviii. 1. *Be merciful unto me, O God; be merciful unto me; because my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.*

L E T T E R XXXIV.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glasgow*.

Loving and affectionate Brother in Christ,

I WAS refreshed by your two letters. O that I could bless God for the opening up of the fountain of the great depth of his everlasting love, and for the revelation of his Son Jesus Christ.—By reason of my distressed and weak condition, I am very unable to speak to you, though my friend is very willing to write what I say. I am waiting a call from the Lord to be gone. Pray the Lord, that he may enable me to honour him while in life, and at death. All I intend, at present, if the Lord enable to it, is to give you a small hint of what is most remarkable in my exercise, since I last wrote you. I have had some violent assaults from Satan; and the low case of Zion at this day lies also heavy upon my spirit: the cause that is down, will not abide down: *When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory*, Psalm cii. 16.

One day I was in a difficulty about a duty I was engaged in: I wist not how to manage it, either to the glory of God or the edification of others. I went to the Lord by prayer, for direction; and that scripture came to mind, James i. 5. *If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask it of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not.* I was enlarged in pleading the out-making of it; and got something of a view both of the faithfulness of God, and of his boundless liberality: *And will not your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask it of him?* Luke xi. 13. I was suddenly assaulted by Satan with that temptation, Where is it said in all the scriptures, *Let a woman ask wisdom of God?* I wist not how to answer the enemy, for I did not mind a scripture that read that way: with

difficulty I intended to hold fast my persuasion, I had formerly attained unto. I believed that woman sinned in Adam, and fell with him in his first transgression: I believe also, that the way of their recovery out of that miserable state is by the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, whom *God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God*, Rom. iii. 25.; notwithstanding I got not my mind fully releaved, till it pleased the Lord, in his free love and adorable sovereignty, to bear in those words with a sweet refreshing power, light, and life accompanying them; *He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up to the death for us ALL, how shall he not with him freely give us ALL things?* and, *All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's*, Rom. viii. 32. 1 Cor. iii. 23.—With these many *all things* that God giveth with Christ, I saw that God giveth wisdom also.

The last day of December was a very remarkable day with me, for much sweet communion and fellowship with God in Christ.—In the morning I was very distressed, and found some reluctance prevailing with me at my present affliction. This is an evil, that, by the grace of God, I desire to keep a watchful eye upon. I cried to the Lord that he would enable me to drink the cup he hath given me to drink, not by constraint, but with submission to his holy will: for I am persuaded infinite wisdom is at the mixing my cup; and infinite power supports and upholds me under it. Faith's views of the rod, in the hand of a loving Father, in the hand of the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; this, I say, sweetens a bitter cup: that sweet word was borne in, John xx. 17. *I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; to my God, and your God*. Such a sweet sense of the love of God accompanied them, as swallowed up almost the sense of the present trouble. Blessings for ever flow upon thy head, O

Emmanuel: the blessing of them that were ready to perish be upon thee. Alas! for my narrow thoughts of him, and his boundless love: my narrow vessel can take in little of the divine glory. It is a saying of Rutherford's, "It is glory that will make our vessels tight." When but a dark view through the glass of the promises of some of the perfections of God, fills the soul, so that nature is like to be exhausted, O what need do I see for glorious Christ to change this vile body, and to fashion it like unto his glorious body? Then I will be made meet to behold all the divine perfections of God shining gloriously in the person of the God-man, *The brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person.* Well may his name be called, *Wonderful*, in whom all the divine perfections meet.

On that remarkable day, I had occasion to speak to some friends that visited me; but I found it a difficulty to speak to them by reason of weakness: I desired them to join with me in prayer and praises to God for the revelation of his well-beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.—After eight o'clock at night, the sweet sense of the love of God was much abated. Sometimes it hath been the case with me, when my sweet and altogether-lovely Lord goes away, he leaves behind him such a sense of the want of his presence, and such vehement desires of soul after him, that a whole creation could neither ease nor please my soul till he came again! This made me often think, that by the grace of God I would rather be in a fiery furnace, with Christ's gracious presence, than in health without him. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you,

GREENOCK, }
Feb. 24. 1767. }

MARION LAIRD.

P. S. Dear friend, I have not been able to write to you what I intended, by reason of my weak and distressed condition. I desire your prayers to God,

with the prayers of other friends, for the use of reason and speech; and that the Lord may enable me to glorify him therewith. Give my kind respects to Mrs. Glen, and other friends: let me have your favourable returns, if it please the Lord to continue me in the body.

M. L.

L E T T E R XXXV.

TO MRS. GLEN, in Glasgow.

Dear and loving Sister, in our Lord Jesus, and companion in affliction,

IT hath been my desire and prayer to God, for a word from himself, to speak unto you; and while I was asking it, these two scriptures were borne in upon my mind, Psalm xvi. 5. *God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early:* with Isa xl. 1. 2. *Comfort ye my people, saith your God; speak comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warefare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.* Your warefare is accomplished in your glorious Head and Husband, the Lord Jesus Christ; and he will see to the actual accomplishment of it, in all his members: *They shall be more than conquerors, through him that loved them.* Think ye not but that a good day is worth the waiting for? The day of your death will be a better day than the day of your birth; a day in which all sorrow will be swallowed up of joy; all darkness will be swallowed up of light: *The Lord will then be your everlasting light; and the days of your mourning shall be ended.*

I remember ye say in your letter, that ye would look on it as a token for good, if any of the Lord's people got liberty on your behalf. Though the Lord, in his free love and adorable sovereignty, be pleased to

give liberty, and the promise both on our behalf, I think your chief comfort lies not so much in that, as in your acting faith on Christ, and on the absolute promises; and going out of yourself into Christ for all you want: *This is the rest, and this is the refreshing, wherewith he causes the weary to rest.* When the ancker of the soul is fixed upon Christ within the vail, let storms of trouble blow from heaven, earth, or hell, the soul will have matter of a song.—Some years ago, I was in meditation to this purpose, What might be the Lord's design in lengthening out my rod so long? Immediately that scripture was borne in on my mind, Isa. lxvi. 5. *Let the Lord be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy.* That view occurred to me from the words, as if the Lord had said, "Let me glorify my
 " wisdom in ordering your rod for a while; let me
 " glorify my power in upholding you under the rod;
 " let me glorify my truth and faithfulness, in perform-
 " ing all the good I have promised you; and I will
 " appear to your joy." My heart replied, *Lord, do as thou hast said.* I am waiting for that joyful appearance; and I am sure I will not be disappointed, for he hath said, *There shall be an end, and thine expectation shall not be cut off.*—Now, that the God of hope, may fill you with all joy and peace in believing, is the desire of your affectionate Sister, and soul's well-wisher,

GREENOCK, }
 March 24. 1767. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XXXVI.

To the Rev. Mr. THOMAS CLARK, in *America.*

Reverend and worthy Sir,

I RECEIVED your letter, dated December 7th, in February. — I remember, Sir, a little after you went from this place, I was informed you were in a

strait betwixt accepting a congregation in the North, and going to America. As the Lord enabled me, I went to him by prayer, and laid the matter before him, earnestly desiring that he would direct you to that part of his vineyard, that was most for his own glory. As for that congregation in the North, I got neither liberty nor light to pray for your going there: but I was enlarged in pleading for your going to America; and those scriptures were borne in with some power and life, Acts xx. 22. *And now behold I go bound in the Spirit to Jerusalem; with Isa. xlii. 4. And the isles shall wait for his law.* The views that occurred to me from these words were to this purpose: I was made to think that ye were to go bound in the Spirit to America; and that the people there waited for his law, or would wait for it. And while I pleaded for a blessing on the means of grace bestowed upon them, that other scripture was borne in on my mind, Psalm cv. 24. *And he increased his people greatly.*

As for Marion Orr, I have cause to be ashamed before the Lord, that I have been so little concerned about her. I remember among the last times I spoke with her, that she had any thing of reason, she desired me to plead the out-making of that promise for her, Heb. ix. 14. *Now the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God.* She said to me, "Go home, and go to your knees, and lay down a lump of hell at Christ's feet, and plead that he may sprinkle my conscience with the blood of infinite value; or else I am eternally undone." I essayed prayer on her behalf; and it pleased the glorious hearer of prayer to bear in with a fresh gale of the Holy Spirit, Isa. liv. 8. *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.*

As for my own case I know not well what to say of

it; I am afraid, and am assured of it, that I live not suitably to the favours and privileges I receive from God, and to the relation I stand in unto him, and he unto me, as being my God in Christ Jesus, and Redeemer, both by price and by power: I am not my own, but bought with a price; therefore I ought to glorify God in my soul and body, which are his.—I do not live suitably to him as my *Head*. God in Christ is the believer's Head; and so to live as a member of such a Head is to draw spiritual virtue, light, life, and comfort from the Head.—Neither have I lived suitably to him as my *Husband*: *Thy maker is thy Husband*. To live suitably to him in this relation is to live reverently, lovingly, with submission and subjection to him, as becometh the spouse of such a glorious Husband. O to know more of this divine life, a living unto God!—I have cause to be ashamed and confounded, because of my ingratitude to him.

Dear Sir, pray that the Lord may enable me to honour him in life, and to honour him at death.—That the grace of our Lord Jesus may be with you, is the desire of your friend,

GREENOCK, }
April 15. 1767. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XXXVII.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

I RECEIVED your letter, and was much refreshed by it.—I have been much straitned in the duty of prayer: I am straitned to apprehend the nature of the immediate vision of God's face; or of the man Christ Jesus, as to his human nature, how it is united to the divine. Surely, *I am more brutish than any man, and*

have not the understanding of a man, Prov. xxx. 2. I mean, heart-melting, refreshing, and strengthening views of Christ and his glory; of his nature and offices. O to be with Jesus! Many a heavenly lesson he teacheth. O to be his disciple! He hath the words of eternal life. He allows me to claim my interest in him: Thou art my hiding-place; thou shalt keep me free from trouble; and compass me about with songs of deliverance. There is no fear of the law: glory to God that it took hold of our Surety, the Lord Jesus Christ: it would not let him go till he had paid the utmost farthing of debt due by an elect world. His head was wet with the dew, and his locks with the drops of the night.

On the Sabbath-day last, I was conversing with a woman upon old experiences. The Lord brought to my mind two scriptures that were formerly refreshing to me, and made them again a sweet feast to my soul to feed upon. The two scriptures were, 1 Cor. iii. 23. *All are yours; and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's:* and, *What can David say more?* 2 Sam. vii. 20. I have longed much to be with himself, that I may see the immediate vision and glory above. O to attain to a large measure of the grace of humility; it makes a very beautiful person: it is part of Christ's robe where-with he adorns the elect; and it casts a lustre on all his attributes, and other works. *Know ye not, that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope?* Rom. v. 4. That hath been a sweet word, and a strengthening one to my soul, *Looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearance of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, Titus i. 13. God is not unrighteous to forget your labour of love, which ye have shewn towards the saints, Heb. vi. 10. What am I, or what is my Father's house?* I am not worth the notice of any, and far less worth his noticing who is high and infinitely holy, who inhabiteth eternity. But what think ye of the manifold wisdom of God? My soul desireth to look with wonder at it.—That the

grace of our Lord Jesus may be with you, is the desire of your Sister, in the Lord,

GREENOCK, }
Jan. 1st, 1768. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

To Mrs. GLEN, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Sister, in our Lord Jesus,

WE cannot want any of the sweet, nor yet of the bitter things that are in our lot; they contribute to make up a mixed song: *I will sing of mercy and judgment; unto thee, O Lord, will I sing*, Psal. ci. 1. If once we were arrived at heaven, it will be a song of pure mercy; of mercy present, and judgment past. Christ is longing for our deliverance as well as we are ourselves; he doth not delay, a single moment, when the design of the affliction, rod, or trial is attained unto: he only waiteth, that our souls may be duly humbled, that the mighty hand of God may exalt them in due time.

O what think ye of Christ and his cross, as well as his crown? Do ye not love him? I know that ye love him; and he is worthy of our love. *His countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedar: his mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O ye daughters of Jerusalem.*—What think ye of seventy or eighty years pilgrimage? It is just a ripening us for eternity. We must be *sojourners here, as all our fathers were*; then we shall sleep in Christ: they who *sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him*. They shall then have a joyful day: *They shall drink, and forget their poverty; and remember their misery no more*, Prov. xxxi. 7.—O blessed be his name, he keepeth the best wine till the latter end of the feast.

Last summer I had a very sore time of trouble, and deserted of the Lord. I often cryed to him, *Shew me wherefore thou contendest with me. Let me hear the voice of the rod, and who hath appointed it.* I either could not hear the voice of the rod, or I would not hear it. I longed to know the worst about myself, that I might come to the blood of Jesus with all my guilt. This was also a part of my conflict in the fourth year of my trouble. He took it out of my hand, and put another thing into it: yet, notwithstanding, he supported me by those very scriptures that I was supported with before. I shall only mention two or three of them to you: *That the trial of your faith being much more precious than that of gold that perisheth; though it be tried, it is found to the praise, and glory, and honour of God, at the appearance of Jesus Christ, 1 Pet. i. 7. And Jesus answered and said, Neither this man, nor his parents hath sinned; but that the works of God may be made manifest, John ix. 3.* O blessed be his name that he sends none awarefare on their own charges. I found such a heart-opening in these promises, as made my soul to love him, as the wheels of the chariots of Aminadab. "Let us be glad and give honour to him who hath drunk such a cup of wrath at the Father's hand, as one saith; who hath drunk a cup of red scalding vengeance, that we might drink a cup of consolation, or a cup of fatherly chastisement."

Dear Sister, both pray and praise for me.—That the grace of our Lord Jesus may be with you, is the desire of your Sister, in the Lord,

GREENOCK, }
Feb. 2d, 1768. }

MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I am very much troubled with fainting; and have need of your sympathy at the throne of grace.

L E T T E R XXXIX.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

MY frailty hath hindered me from writing to you before now. O that I could cause his name to be remembered to all generations! *Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us, and washed us in his own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God even his Father.* O! his loving-kindness overcomes me: his love breaks the enmity of my heart.—O what a beast am I that cannot praise him more than what I do! Attacks from the powers of darkness were not awanting. One morning I was looking upon my hands; they were so swelled I thought it a forerunner of death. Then the Lord brought to my mind an old promise, about this time eleven years: I spent that night in the fear of death; I had the experience of many trials, but none of death: it was the way I never went before. Then he brought to my mind, *Psal. xviii. 28. The Lord my God will enlighten my darkness; with Mal. iii. 1. The Lord whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in.* Those and many other scriptures, were sweet matter of meditation. *Song iii. 5. I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the roes and by the hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love, till he please. Gen. xxxii. 26. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.* Those two scriptures were a caution unto watchfulness, after such a sweet time. *Jer. xiii. 16. Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cause darkness. I was very terrified at what followed in that verse, And before your feet stumble upon the dark mountains; and while ye look for light, he turn it unto the shadow of*

death, and make it gross darkness. God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints; and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him. Kifs the son lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way. I thought it implied a kifs of subjection and godly fear. O but the nearer heaven the new wine is the sweeter. I have had a good summer of it, though very frail. I think he says unto me, *Drink, yea drink abundantly, O my Beloved.* And what improvement do I make of it! O to get him glorified. I would desire your prayers and praises to God for me, with other friends.—That the grace of our Lord Jesus may be with you, is the desire of your affectionate Sister, in the Lord,

GREENOCK, }
June 24. 1768. }

MARION LAIRD.

P. S. Send me word how your daughter does since she came home. I desire the favour of you to let Mrs. Glen see this line, as I am under great obligations to her for her kindness unto me.

M. L.

L E T T E R XL.

To Mrs. GLEN, in Glasgow.

Dear and loving Sister, in our Lord Jesus,

UNDER all our distressing circumstances, we have the greatest reason of thankfulness for the gift of Christ: *Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him. Lift up your heads, for the day of your redemption draweth nigh.* I had no thought of writing to you, I am so indisposed with trouble on my body: but hearing of your being very ill made me to lay your case before the Lord; and John xvi. 22. occurred to my mind: *Ye now have sorrow; but I will see you a-*

gain, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. O love him who first loved you, and gave himself for you. *Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him.* O say of him, he is my husband, my all; and let that suffice you. He hath loved you with an everlasting love; and therefore with loving-kindness will he draw you. His love is wonderful love; it is distinguishing love; it lighted upon you, when it passed by men and angels. "Endure chastisement, for God dealeth with you as with sons; and if the Father chasten you not; or if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons, Heb. xii. 7, 8." There all believers are excluded, who want chastisement. Do not pore over-much upon your affliction: by your so doing, you will bring the affliction heavier upon yourself. O let your thoughts run out upon Christ: *In all your afflictions he was afflicted. Cast your burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain you.* I do remember, within this half year, that I must either have had my eyes toward the Lord for support, or else I would have sunk beneath the stream. All praise and honour be unto God; for I never looked unto him sooner than I was lightened: *They looked to him and were lightened, and their faces were not asbamed,* Psalm xxxiv. 5. I have spent much of my time in seeking an interest in glorious Christ; and when that is done, I want conformity unto God: and conformity unto God discovers many wants: I want *love* to him. I want *holiness* unto him; holiness unto God: *Be ye holy, for I am holy, saith the Lord.* I want *knowledge* of him: I know nothing as I ought to know; I am a beast before him. I want *zeal* for his glory and honour. I want *fear* unto the Lord; *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are round about him.*—O what am I, or what is my Father's house, that hitherto the Lord hath helped me?—O that you would praise and adore him.

Turn your mourning into praises; it will then fare better with you.—May the God of peace be with you, to uphold and support you unto the end,

GREENOCK, }
Oct. 26. 1768. }

MARION LAIRD.

P. S. Give my kind sympathy to Mr. Gray: I have been very much obliged to you and him, both for your former and late kindness.

L E T T E R XLI.

To Mr. J—s G—y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

I RECEIVED your line, dated the 6th of December. I am much obliged to you for your kindness to me, who am truly less than the least of God's mercies: but, *Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, honour, glory, and dominion.* I desire to believe that infinite wisdom and infinite love are at the mixing of my cup; and that God's tender heart will carve out no more than what he makes me able to bear: this is a great help to patience under the rod. My trouble puts me in mind of the building of the ark; it was long in building, and every stroke that it got was a warning to the old world of their dissolution: so is my trouble unto me; it is a warning of the putting off the earthly house of this tabernacle: then we have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, whose builder and maker is God. *It doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, and behold his glory.* He hath commended his love unto my soul: O that I could commend his love unto others; that those who see no beauty in him, may fall

in love with him. O! did ye ever feel the smell of his garments? *His garments smelleth of myrrh, aloes, and cassia. His name is as ointment poured forth; therefore do the virgins love thee.* O! it is little I can say of him; and it is little I can think of him; it is little I can love of him, who is *altogether lovely; white and ruddy, the chief among ten thousand.*

The beginning of February I was very bad; for two days, I was under desertion. O I thought long for the Lord's returning again; and he returned again with that sweet promise, Song ii. 10. *My Beloved said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. Tho' I be black as hell in myself, his beauty makes me fair: Palm xlv. 2. Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.* I was pleading with the Lord that he would lift up the light of his countenance upon my soul, in passing through the vail of the shadow of death; and that he would enable me to declare to others what he hath done for my soul, that men to the Lord would give praise for his loving-kindness; but this with submission to his will. While I was pleading, that promise was darted into my mind, Mal. iii. 10. *Prove me herewith, saith the Lord of hosts; if I open not the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing till there be not room enough to receive it. He brings things new and old out of his treasures. He brought to my remembrance an old promise, that was long out of mind, which supported me when I was hearing the gospel. I could have wished then for two Sabbaths in one week; for then they were to me exceeding sweet. He brought to my remembrance, Isa. lviii. 13, 14. To call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord honourable; and made thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and fed thee with the heritage of Jacob.* I was minding your daughter; and that promise was borne in on my mind, Jer. xxxi. 18. *I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus, Turn thou me,*

and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God.—Often when I think on her, the woman of Samaria comes into my mind; and it affords matter of prayer unto me.

She used to say, at the beginning of her trouble, “The sorrows of the world wrought death unto her soul; and now hell-fire was kindled in her breast.” She took up her Bible, and read Heb. xiv. 14. *Now, through the eternal Spirit, Christ offered up himself without spot unto God, to purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God.* She said unto me, “Go and plead that promise for me, or else I am eternally undone: go home to your knees, and lay a lump of hell at Christ’s feet.” I went alone for her; and got that promise, Isa. liv. 8. *In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer.* I thought to have seen that promise have some farther out-making before her death; but the Lord is sovereign, just, and holy; and doth all things well.—Pray and praise for me: pray that the Lord may be with me in passing through the valley and shadow of death. Rests your friend, in Christ,

GREENOCK, }
Feb. 27. 1769. }

MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I will be much obliged to you, if you would read this to Mrs. Glen, and send me word how she is.

L E T T E R XLII.

TO MR. ROBERT STEWART, in Paisley.

Dear and loving Cousin,

I DESIRE to communicate unto you some sweet experiences, which I have from my lovely Lord

H h

Jesus Christ, who saith, *I will make the feeble as David, and David as the angel of the Lord.*

The last week I had two days that were very refreshing for sweet communion and fellowship with our Lord Jesus. I missed nothing so much as love, to lovely Jesus. My heart was pained, because I could love him so little. O Cousin, set your love upon him; ye will never rue it through eternity. I saw nothing in this earth, but a few imperfect saints: they will shortly come to heaven, as soon as they are ready. O to behold the vision of Jehovah and the Lamb, where every new look will excite matter of praise and wonder to the ages of eternity: *But I shall see his face in righteousness, and be satisfied with his likeness.* O to have my will sunk in the divine will of God, where I would find it no more again. O to win to praise and adore him who is the perfection of beauty. O that I could adore him, who is so kind unto me as to allow me the sweet blinks of his presence and countenance, twice or thrice a-day; and, for ordinary, not above three days absence: but when he goes away, he creates a want in the soul, that nothing but himself can make up. He fills the soul with self-abhorrence and loathing of itself, because of its own abominations. In agreeableness to that word, *I will go into my place until they acknowledge their iniquity, and seek me early:* then the Lord comes and manifests himself to the soul that cannot want him. O to be perfect in love! O what flames of love will be in heaven, where every saint will be made a flame. John Tinnie, whom you wrote of, as he used to express himself, was like one lying at the water-side, waiting for his Lord's coming. He said to the Rev. Mr. Turner, that day he died, "Sir, I do not rue my choice of the Lord for my portion;" and he died that very night, being on Sabbath, about seven o'clock: he died very comfortably.

Dear Cousin, pray that the Lord may perfect that which concerneth me. Pray that he may lift up the

light of his countenance upon me. Pray that he may be with me through the valley of the shadow of death; that those that are left behind may have reason to praise and adore him, for his loving-kindness unto me. This with submission to his holy will. — The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you,

GREENOCK, }
June. 8. 1769. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XLIII.

TO MR. ROBERT STEWART, in Paisley.

Dear and loving Cousin,

I HAD no thought of writing to you so soon. *Ex-tol the Lord with me; let us exalt his name together,* Psal. xxxiv. 3. *For he is thy Lord, and worship thou him,* Psal. xlv. 11. *God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of his saints; and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him,* Psalm lxxxix. 7. My heart has been much enlarged with views of the love of God, the spring of our redemption; the righteousness of Christ through which it is conveyed to us; his offices, and his endearing relations. O what a beast am I, that can love him so little, when he is worthy of so much love. I think he makes me a demonstration of the power and reality of religion. Glory, glory to God, I never found a sweeter composure of spirit; yea, I found just cause to bless him for the rod, and to bless him because it was his good pleasure to afflict me; *This is the doing of the Lord, and marvellous in my eyes.* — If the Lord withdraw divine support, but one quarter of an hour, I would soon dishonour him; I could not bear the rod with patience.

On the last Sabbath-day, I got a view of my lot being well ordered of God: *He doth all things well.* He

is a God of infinite wisdom. He hath power and skill to order a temptation for his own glory and my good. I saw that temptation of self-murder to be wisely ordered: it came to me before I was twenty years, and lasted till that summer before I took my trouble; and by means of that temptation the Lord brought down my corruptions, that were strong like giants: the sin of unbelief, pride, and self, and many other abominations. By means of this temptation, the Lord kept me near to himself; yet I would have been glad to have been quit of it: it was an uneasy thorne in my side. I was made to *bear the yoke in my youth*. I never thought, in these days, when it was so bitter to me, that I would have had cause to bless God for it: and, O my dear Cousin, do ye bless him for it; and all them who hear of it, bless him for it, in behalf of the vilest of sinners. That scripture occurred to me, and I thought it was exceeding sweet, Deut. xxxii. 10, 11, 12. *He found him in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed, he kepted him as the apple of his eye. As the eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings; so the Lord did lead him, when there was no strange God with him.* O Sirs, Jehovah, the God of truth, did for me what no strange God could do: When my lovely Lord goes away what deadness he leaves behind him? O what deadness and lifelessness taketh place! Iniquity prevail-eth much, which made me to cry out, O what a beast am I! not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof: *Yet will I look again toward thy holy temple.* Yet I got leave to plead with him that he would lift up the light of his countenance, for his great name's sake.—*Be it known unto you, O house of Israel, that I do not this for your sakes, but for my great name's sake.* While I was pleading my lovely Lord returned again with a sweet word, Song vi. 3. *I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine: he feedeth among the lillies.* O to be above, where I will get an open vision of Jehovah and

the Lamb: *Blessed are they that dwell in thy house; they will be still praising thee.* O pray and praise for me.—May the God of peace be with you. Ye speak of a little reviving among you; and I desire it may grow as the corn, and cast forth roots as Lebanon,

GREENOCK, }
July 19. 1769. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XLIV.

To Mr. J——s G——r, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

I HAVE wearied very much for your writing to me. My lovely Lord hath commended himself unto me; and, O that I could commend him to others, that they might fall in love with lovely Jesus. Woes me that I can love him so little, who is worthy of so much love, and altogether lovely. There is a scripture that was much in my mind, Psalm cvii. 8. *For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness.* I think that scripture will have its full accomplishment in heaven, in the full vision of God. There were some who desired me to remember them in prayer to God: I got a very large view of the ever-blessed, of the adorable and glorious Trinity of Persons for them; *The Father himself loveth you.* I remember a saying of Dr. Owen's. 'When our Lord was about to leave this world, the disciples desired their Lord to intreat the Father's love for them: but our Lord told them, the Father himself loveth you; the Son purchased his redemption; the Holy Ghost applied it to his soul:' and I was made to say, O happy man. Satan soon attacked me, and suddenly suggested, that the Son did not purchase our redemption, but that the Father had purchased it; whereas the Father loved us,

because Christ loved us. Satan threw such a mist and fog upon the word, that I could not see, till the Lord returned himself, and cast light upon the word: then he rebuked Satan, and shined upon his own blessed word.—Blessed be his glorious name.

I had a sweet manifestation some days bygone: the Lord shined upon that word, Psalm xcvi. 8. *Bring an offering and come into his courts.* O but our Lord Jesus is a sweet-smelling sacrifice unto God: he is a sweet-smelling savour unto God; and by the savoury smell of his ointment he puts away the stinking smell of sin: *He hath magnified the law and made it honourable. He hath brought in an everlasting righteousness,* whereby a guilty rebel, such as I am, hath favour with God and acceptance. My Lord is my life and my strength, my righteousness, my Surety, my all, for time and for eternity: and though I had ten thousand souls I would trust them all with him. O for a full gale of the Spirit of God to blow me into the harbour of glory, even into Emmanuel's land, where *the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary be at rest.*

I was pleading with the Lord for his blessing on the little that I can read: when thus employed, Isa. lx. 19. came into my mind with power and life, and brought my will to a kindly submission to the will of God. The words themselves were most sweet: *The sun shall be no more thy light by day, neither for brightness shall the moon give light unto thee; but the Lord shall be unto thee an everlasting light, and thy God thy glory.* O what a want is it that he cannot fill up! *My God shall supply all your wants, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus,* Phil. iv. 19.—By this time the manifestation seemed to wear off: and that word came to my mind, *Nevertheless I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away.* I could not win to a submission to his holy will. I was loth to want his sweet presence; but Satan was not awanting with his stratagems. I said, *My soul shall follow hard after him.* O

that I had a wrestling spirit like Jacob; he wrestled with him for the blessing till the breaking of the day; and, as a Prince, *He had power with God, and prevailed.*—But while I was thinking on this scripture, poor backsliding Scotland came to my mind; poor covenant-breaking and covenant-burning Scotland! O that the Lord would be as a purifier of silver unto her, that she may offer unto the Lord a sacrifice that is more acceptable for all the ills that she hath done. The Lord has thoughts of love concerning her: he says of her, *This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it*, Psalm cxxxii. 14. Though we are a covenant-breaking people; he is a covenant-keeping God. He says of Zion, *My mercy will I keep for her for evermore; and my covenant shall stand fast with her*, Psalm lxxxix. 28. I desire the help of your prayers and praises, with other acquaintances, unto lovely Jesus, for what he hath done for me.—The grace of our Lord be with you,

GREENOCK, }
Oct. 2d, 1769. }

MARION LAIRD.

P. S. I long much to know how my dear friend Mrs. Glen is: I would be glad to know how it fares with her soul.—I think the Lord says concerning her, *Return unto thy rest, O my soul; for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.*

L E T T E R XLV.

TO MR. ROBERT STEWART, in Paisley.

Dear and loving Cousin,

IF the Lord will assist me in it, I will communicate a few experiences to you, which took place with me about the time that the sacrament was dispensed at

Glasgow, and the week thereafter ; particularly on the Sabbath, and the days before. It hath escaped my memory what was matter of exercise to me at that time ; but on the Monday I was pleading that the Lord would not send the multitude away empty, lest they faint by the way. When thus employed, that word came into my mind with life and power. John vii. 37. *In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.* And Psalm lxxxiv. 7. *They go from strength to strength, every one of them in Zion appeareth before God.* O but the Lord takes a care of his people ; he will not leave them in the wilderness till he bring them home to Zion.

I was endeavouring to bless the Lord for an enlargement that a young man got on the Sabbath-day, and that word came into my mind, John i. 50. *Thou shalt see greater things than these.* 1 John iii. 3. *It doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, and see him as he is, and behold his glory.* There is a full view of our Lord Jesus gotten in heaven : wait a little, and then the glass of ordinances will be drawn, and the glass of promises will be withdrawn ; then we shall have the open vision of Jehovah and the Lamb. Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain from eternity, decretively ; slain typically, under the old-testament dispensation ; and slain actually, in the fulness of time. It pleased God to give me a more full view of our Lord Jesus Christ, as the wisdom of God in a mystery ; then I abhorred myself in dust and ashes, and said to the Lord, I am a beast, and know nothing as I ought to know : *That which I know not, O Lord, teach thou me.* The Lord give me wisdom and knowledge ; for I know nothing of divine things as I ought to know : I am unclean, unclean ; utterly unworthy to take thy holy and reverent name in my sinful and polluted lips.

I had of late some pretty fore turns of my trouble ; but they did not last very long. The Lord enabled me to say, *Here am I, let him do unto me what seemeth him good.* I found my will sunk in the divine will of God : I found a sweet refreshment come from the presence of the Lord, which made me to say, " Lord, " never let me find my will again." I was fore beset by the devil, and his firey darts : I thought I had my heart much to blame in it ; for it first departed from the Lord, and wandered upon the mountains of vanity ; and there I met with these vile abominable thoughts. —I pleaded earnestly with the Lord that he would not let them come through my mind again.

Upon Friday night last, one came to visit me, and complained much of Satan's temptations, and of the Lord's hidding himself : He said unto me, " Ye may " get a visit of the Lord this night, or in the morning." Glory to him, he came in the morning ; and his visit was so seasonable and sweet, that I invited all things on earth to praise him. Praise is too heavy a work for us. I joined issue with the Psalmist, Psal. cxlviii. 2. *Praise him, ye angels ; praise him, O ye sun, moon, and stars : praise him dragons, and every depth.* —But my soul is more obliged to praise him than all these.

I was after this led to mount Calvery, to see our Lord and his bloody sufferings. I saw the guilt of an elect world meeting upon him. O what a load of guilt had he on his back ! The sins of an elect world, the Father's wrath, and the curse of a broken law ! The Father gave the sword of justice a command to awake against the Man that was his Fellow, Zech. xiii. 7. Had he not been God as well as man, he could not have borne it one moment. Oh ! what a burden had mount Calvery upon it ! It never had such a weight upon it before, nor ever will again. It made a heathen Philosopher cry out, " That the God of nature " suffered, or the world was dissolving." I was com-

plaining before, that I could not get a suitable meditation on our Lord's sufferings: but this day I may behold, with wonder and admiration, Jesus cried out, *My God, my God! why hast thou forsaken me?* He was deserted of the Father, as he was Mediator; I think so: but his union with the God-head standeth firm.

I had afterwards some confused thoughts concerning Christ's assuming of the human nature. Satan endeavoured to persuade me, that he had assumed a human person, which would have made four persons in the adorable Trinity: but I could not believe that.—Then I cried to the Lord, by prayer and supplication, that he would send forth his light and his truth, and let them be guides unto me. A little after this, that word came into my mind, *The power of the Holy Ghost overshadowed the virgin*, and that very moment the human nature was joined to the divine Person of the Son of God.—There is a mystery indeed!

I would have sent word to the young man that has staid long in the place of the breaking forth of children; but I am not able, at present; tell him, that he must do as the lepers did at the gates of Samaria: if they staid in the city they must die; if they went out of the city, they would die. Cast yourself upon glorious Christ, you will but die: come without any legal qualification; if you stand waiting upon them, they will be a wall between you and heaven; there will be no winning over it. Come polluted and vile as you are to Christ. He standeth with out-stretched arms to embrace you; and if ye come to Christ, and find not welcome, ye will be the first that ever he refused.—That the God of peace may be with you, is the desire of your Cousin,

GREENOCK, }
Nov. 27. 1769. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XLVI.

TO MR. THOMAS GRAHAM, in Paisley.

I WOULD very gladly speak a word to you, Sir, were the Lord pleased to back it with power, life, and liberty.

I would mention some scriptures that occurred to me on your behalf: Isa. xlv. 22. *Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved.* This is a very extensive call, from the ends of the earth. Look unto me, glorious Me! *That speak in righteousness, mighty to save.*

The next scripture that occurred, was Ezek. xxxvi. 25. *I will sprinkle you with clean water, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you.* O Sirs, here God pronounces the blood of Christ to be clean: *The heavens are not clean in his sight; and he chargeth his angels with folly.* Here *Christ's blood cleanseth from all sin.* Are your sins and guilt so heavy that they are like to press you down to hell? and you are made to wonder at the divine patience of God, that keeps you so long out of hell, notwithstanding of all your provocations? Do you see the law pursuing you for the debt of perfect obedience? send the law to Christ: *Christ is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth.* Christ hath a righteousness to fulfil the law; and he hath paid the utmost farthing of the debt to the law and justice of God: upon the cross he said, *It is finished;* and *gave up the ghost.* He hath strength to give you to perform duties, for work and warefare. O love him who loved you from eternity, who is altogether lovely. He is the beauty of the Godhead. Had you the eye of faith but opened to see Christ's ravishing beauty, his excellency and glory, you would be ready to wonder why the world were not all running after him.

The third scripture was, John xi. 44. *Jesus said,*

Loose him, and let him go. What need hath a sinner to put the work into glorious Christ's hand? *He was bound about with grave cloaths.* Ye cannot walk one foot in the way of the Lord, until ye be loosed, and let go. He is bound about with the chain of unbelief: he is bound about with the chain of self: he is bound about with the chain of pride; with the chain of atheism; with the chain of formality; with the chain of carnality; with the chain of enmity against God. The heart is *not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be*, while in a natural state. He thinks he has some duty or other to present to the Lord: prayers, tears, or the like. It is supernatural power that will bring a sinner out of himself, to rely upon Christ Jesus, for righteousness and strength.

Be not overmuch troubled with those hellish blasphemous thoughts of the devil: they are like lightening thrown into a room; they are not of the room, yet they are thrown into the room: so are these blasphemous thoughts thrown into your heart. Let Satan answer for them unto God, they are his, and not yours. A carnal wandering thought, in time of prayer, is more sinful than they are. When you go to the minister, or to a Christian acquaintance to complain, neither think these thoughts over again, nor yet name them over to them; but tell them that you are troubled with blasphemous thoughts of the devil: they will understand you very well. Satan would have all convictions to come to nothing; thereby he gains his point, to keep poor sinners away from Christ. Believe not Satan, though he tell you that ye have the external call of the gospel, ye will never get the internal call of the Spirit of God; *He is a liar from the beginning, and the truth is not in him.*

Another scripture that occurred was, Isa. xlv. 3. *I will pour waters upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground.* If you are not thirsty, you are exceeding dry. Are you a-thirst for this or the other va-

nity, or lust, or idol? But I expect better things of you; even that you are thirsting for a drink of Christ's water which he has to give, which is to them that receive it, a *well of water, springing up unto everlasting life*. If this be the thirst that you are longing for, *He will satisfy your desires, and fill the hungry with good things*. He will answer your prayers in his own time. He is the merciful Samaritan that comes over the sinner's weakness: he pours wine and oil into his wounds. *Those that are broken in their hearts, and grieved in their minds, he healeth; he tenderly binds up their painful wounds*. When the sinner is come this length, that he cannot believe more than he can remove mountains, it is the breaking of the day with him; there is room in his heart to work faith in it: and, O that Christ may work faith, and bear all the glory. To whom be praise, glory, and honour, for ever and ever.—
The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you,

GREENOCK, }
Jan. 18. 1770. }

MARION LAIRD.

L E T T E R XLVII.

To Mr. J——s G——y, in *Glasgow*.

Dear and loving Brother in our Lord Jesus,

I COULD not write with my Brother-in-law to Mr. Smith, to thank him for his kind letter. I believe that Mrs. Glen left me her legacy for the Lord's sake, though I am unworthy of any of his mercies. O that the Lord may enable me to glorify and to honour him with it. There arose a question in my mind whether *love* or *praise* was the greatest duty; immediately it occurred, that *love* was the greatest. Love makes way for the praising of God. I wot not how it comes to pass, but I think I want love more than any other grace.—Sometimes I am afraid of repining against the Lord, why he keeps me so long here: *He doth all things*

well. It ill becomes me to think so of him, who is so kind and so lovely a Lord unto me: O for a will sunk in the divine will of God. O but that is a sweet word, 2 Cor. xii. 9. *And he said unto me, My grace shall be sufficient for thee; and my strength made perfect in thy weakness.* I am waiting for the Lord's accomplishment of his word; and such a word as that, Mal. iii. 1. *The Lord whom ye seek, will suddenly come to his temple; even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in, Rev. xxii. 12. Behold I come quickly! and my soul faith, Even so; come, Lord Jesus.*

Sometimes I am dead and lifeless, and am active for no spiritual duty, until the Lord come back again. He sometimes lays a burden of concern for others upon my spirit, and brings me near to himself, and makes me to say, *Behold I vile, I am unclean, unclean: but thou art holy, thou that dost inhabit Israel's praise.*

This way I got access for your old daughter: when I was pleading for her, the Lord bore in upon my spirit, Hab. ii. 3. *The vision is yet for an appointed time; but at the end it will speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.* In those words I got a view of the Father and the Son agreeing, from eternity, upon her conversion; and ordaining that precise moment for her conversion: and it is your duty to pray and to wait for it, till the Lord perform his word.

This may suffice Mr. Smith's enquiry at me. I am unabled, by reason of my trouble being heavy upon me, either to speak to you, or to write to him: but I desire to bless and to adore the Lord, that it is not worse with me. I desire both you and him to pray unto, and also to praise the Lord for me. — This is the desire of a prisoner,

GREENOCK, }
June 22. 1770. }

MARION LAIRD.

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